British Human Rights Organisations and Soviet Dissent, 1965-1985

Mark Hurst

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Supervisors: Dr Philip Boobbyer and Professor David Welch

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Contents

Abstract

This thesis develops the literature on the role of human rights in the Cold War by highlighting the impact of British human rights organisations in the response to Soviet dissent. It argues that human rights groups played an essential role in compiling and distributing information on Soviet dissenters to all levels of British society. These groups all held empiricism at the centre of their campaigns, utilising an array of information to support their activism. This approach entailed the development of relationships between groups, which led to a network of activists, all working towards supporting Soviet dissenters.

The first chapter of this thesis assesses Amnesty International's output on Soviet dissenters, focusing on the groups publications. Amnesty's translation of the *samizdat* journal *The Chronicle of Current Events* and its own publication *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* were influential on journalists and other human rights groups. The high level of research produced by Amnesty in this period was in deep contrast to its overstretched research department, who are considered in depth.

The second chapter focuses on groups formed to respond to the Soviet political abuse of psychiatry as a way to suppress political dissidents. It explores how groups such as the Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals and the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse campaigned on behalf of dissidents, and demonstrates the influence that they had on official groups such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

The final chapter examines the response to religious persecution in the Soviet Union, focusing on the demonstrative campaigning of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry (the 35's) and the more academic Keston College. This chapter demonstrates how despite the outward differences between these two organisations, they held much in common such as a reliance on an empirical method in their campaigns.

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Abbreviations Used

- The 35's – The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry
- APA – American Psychiatric Association
- AUSNP – All Union Society of Neuropathologists and Psychiatrists (Soviet Union)
- CAPA – Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse
- CSRC – Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism
- EGBDF – Every Good Boy Deserves Favour
- GIP – Global Initiative on Psychiatry (formerly known as the Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry)
- IAPUP – International Association on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry
- ICM – International Council Meeting (Amnesty International)
- IDC - IDC Amnesty International Microfiche Collection, 1962-2008, Marylebone Information Service, Marylebone Library, London.
- IEC – International Executive Committee (Amnesty International)
- IISG - *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis* (International Institute of Social History), Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- KNS – Keston News Service
- MRC – Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick
- MSCSJ – Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry
- NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
- NUM – National Union of Miners
- RCL – Religion in Communist Lands (Keston College)
- RCPsych – Royal College of Psychiatrists
- SCOUPP – Special Committee on the Unethical Practice of Psychiatry (Royal College of Psychiatrists)
- SCPAP – Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry (Royal College of Psychiatrists)
- UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- UofS – Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Archive, University of Southampton, Hartley Library Special Collections
- WOOC - Work On Own Country rule (Amnesty International)
- Working Group – The Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals
- WPA – World Psychiatric Association
- WSI - Writers and Scholars International

List of Images

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

- Image 3.5 – Michael Sherbourne at home, date unknown, Michael Sherbourne's papers.
- Image 3.6 – Michael Sherbourne, Anatoly Shcharansky, Muriel Sherbourne and Avital Shcharansky, Date of photo unknown, approximately late 1986, Michael Sherbourne's papers.
- Image 3.7 – Ida Nudel at home, date unknown, Michael Sherbourne's papers.
- Image 3.8 – Michael Bourdeaux speaking at a Keston College Reception held in Church House, Westminster, 25 April 1984. Picture file, Keston Institute Archive, Baylor University, TX.
- Image 3.9 – Front Cover of Keston News Service, No. 114, 22 December 1980.
- Image 3.10 – Front Cover of Keston News Service No. 122, 24 April 1981.
- Image 3.11 – 'O Come, Let Us Worship', *Frontier*, November-December 1987.
- Image 3.12 – 'Prayer & Praise', *Frontier*, July-August 1992.
- Image 3.13 – Margaret Thatcher at a Keston College reception held at Church House, Westminster, 25 April 1984. Picture file, Keston Institute Archive, Baylor University, TX.

Introduction

In the course of the Cold War, human rights played an ever increasing role in the relations between the Soviet Union and the wider world. Concern for prisoners of conscience persecuted by the Soviet authorities grew in the West throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 US Trade Act and the Helsinki Accords of 1975 are instances where concerns for human rights directly impacted on the international conflict. Yet despite the influence of the concept of human rights on international relations in this period, little is known of the role played by groups formed in the West to campaign on behalf of Soviet political dissenters. What role did these groups have, what was their purpose, and how influential were they on wider political developments?

Dissidents in the Soviet Union were at the centre of public and political concern for human rights in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, particularly from Western Europe and the United States. The Soviet dissident movement was a loose collection of individuals who stood up against the oppression of a totalitarian regime, notorious for the way in which it persecuted political opponents. Their protests against the Soviet regime, which restricted their civil liberties to a minimum, were regularly met with the harshest of punishments ranging from lengthy spells in prison to personal intimidation by members of the KGB.

The resistance of these dissidents did not occur in a domestic vacuum, but relied on the support of the international community. As the prominent dissident Yuri Orlov noted in his memoirs *Dangerous Thoughts*, 'without pressure from abroad, any internal protest was virtually useless'.[1] Charles Rhéaume and Barbara Walker have both highlighted the important role that Western opinion played on the Soviet dissident movement, and how dissidents utilised support

[1] Y. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts: Memoirs of a Russian Life* (New York, 1991) p.170.

from the West in their campaigns.[2] Details of the persecution of dissidents made their way to the West through *samizdat*, exiled dissidents and the reports of journalists.[3]

Soviet dissenters were reliant on the attention they received from the West. Individuals and organisations in the West who put pressure on the Soviet authorities were essential for dissenters, without whom their campaigns would have undoubtedly been unsuccessful. These dissidents needed the political leverage against the Soviet regime that an international campaign on their behalf gave. On the whole, Western governments took the plight of the dissidents increasingly seriously, and made official enquiries as to their position during meetings with Soviet officials. At the centre of this pressure was a collection of human rights organisations, who collated information on the dissidents, and campaigned fiercely on their behalf. Yet despite the importance of these Western groups in shaping wider attitudes towards the Soviet dissidents, their role has been largely overlooked to date. Indeed, the historiography of the role of human rights organisations in the Cold War is notably limited.

To date, discussion of human rights in the historiography of the Cold War has largely focused on the impact that it had on high politics. In this literature, human rights are discussed in direct reference to other issues, rather than as an important subject in its own right. For example, John Lewis Gaddis' *The Cold War*, only refers to human rights in direct relation to the SALT arms treaty negotiations and other international discussions.[4] Likewise, Richard Crockatt only refers to human rights in his work on the Cold War alongside foreign policy issues.[5] Robert English, noted for his work on the impact of 'new thinking' on the Soviet regime after 1985, refers to the impact that Margaret Thatcher had on Mikhail Gorbachev's developing humanitarian approach to foreign

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[2] C. Rhéaume, 'Western Scientists' Reaction to Andrei Sakharov's Human Rights Struggle in the Soviet Union, 1968-1989', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 1, (February, 2008), pp. 1-20; and B. Walker, 'Moscow Human Rights Defenders Looks West, Attitudes towards U.S. Journalists in the 1960s and 1970s', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Fall, 2008) pp. 905-927.

[3] *Samizdat* was the underground form of publishing utilised by dissidents to avoid the state censor. It is a play on the name of the major state publishing house, *Gosizdat*, and literally translates as 'self-published'. This material was often typed on thin 'onion leaf' paper to give several impressions, and then distributed amongst dissident circles.

[4] J. L. Gaddis, *The Cold War* (London, 2006) pp. 182-184, 188, and 201.

[5] R. Crockatt, *The Fifty Years War: The United States and the Soviet Union in World Politics, 1941-1991* (Abingdon, 1995) pp. 256-256, and 264,

policy, which included discussion of human rights issues, but fails to directly address the impact that human rights activists had on these figures.[6] These scholars, whilst identifying that human rights played an important role in differing aspects of the Cold War, fail to fully address the role that human rights groups and activists played in promoting these concerns.

Whilst it is apparent that human rights activists have not been sufficiently covered by the historiography on the Cold War to date, the impact of human rights has been discussed by a variety of scholars in recent years. Daniel Thomas' article 'Human Rights Ideas, the Demise of Communism, and the end of the Cold War' focuses on the changes in the Soviet Union at the end of the Cold War. This piece challenges the traditional view of political developments in the Soviet Union in the 1980s being dominated by the economic concerns of a conservative political elite.[7] Instead, Thomas highlights the effect that human rights ideas had on the Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and the reforms that took place in the Soviet Union in the 1980s. He argues that the influence of human rights ideals at the highest levels of the Soviet authorities played a significant part in both the collapse of the Soviet Union, and in the ending of the Cold War.

Thomas' article was published in a special edition of the *Journal of Cold War Studies* that focused on the role of ideas in the end of the Cold War. In an introductory piece to this special edition, Nina Tannenwald and William Wohlforth note that 'the debates of the end of the Cold War provide fertile ground for investigating the role of ideas'.[8] Whilst this is true, it is also the case that the entirety of the Cold War provides rich pickings for the study of ideas, none more so than the concept of universal human rights. Tannenwald and Wohlforth put it that the real issue about the role played by ideas is not whether they 'mattered' in the ending of the Cold War, as most observers would rightly agree that alongside material issues, institutions and individual personalities, they had a clear impact. The important question to ask, they argue, is 'how to

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[6] R. D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals and the End of the Cold War* (New York, 2000) pp. 218-221.
[7] D. Thomas, 'Human Rights Ideas, The Demise of Communism and the End of the Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Spring, 2005) pp. 110-141.
[8] N. Tannenwald and W. Wohlforth, 'Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Spring 2005) p. 4.

discuss productively the role ideas played in this complex outcome'.[9] This is particularly important when considering the role of human rights in the Cold War. It is essential to consider how the concept of human rights, and the work of human rights activists, impacted on the ideological conflict, going beyond the repeated assertion that these concepts were important in this period.[10] Analysis of human rights groups, and how they responded to reports of Soviet human rights violations, is a practical way to consider the impact that ideas had on the Cold War.

Christian Peterson's recent PhD dissertation 'Wielding the Human Rights Weapon: The United States, Soviet Union and Private Citizens, 1975-1989' takes the role of human rights centrally, seeking to place the issue of human rights firmly into the international relations of the late twentieth century.[11] Specifically, Peterson looks to analyse how the concern of private citizens towards human rights violation influenced the actions of the Carter and Reagan administrations in the US, and how their actions, rhetoric and relationship with Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) helped to establish an international network that sought the protection of human rights in the Soviet Union. Peterson uses the reaction to the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords in an attempt to show how an international conception of human rights directly affected the approach of US governments to Soviet dissidents, and the impact this had on US-Soviet relations. Whilst Peterson effectively illustrates that human rights were a key concern of these US administrations, his focus is primarily on the high politics of the US, rather than how human rights activism is driven from below, something that is suggested by his title.

Sarah Snyder's recent book *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War* assesses the role of human rights activists in the Cold War, building on Thomas' work by focusing on the role of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act.[12] Snyder argues that the signing of this act led to a transnational network which pressured governments for adherence to the provisions for human

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[9] Tannenwald and Wohlforth, 'Introduction', p. 8.
[10] For example, Crockatt, *The Fifty Years War*, p. 264, and Gaddis, *The Cold War*, p. 188.
[11] C. Peterson, *Wielding the Human Rights Weapon: The United States, Soviet Union, and Private Citizens, 1975-1989* (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, submitted to Ohio University, June 2009). See also C. Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights: Private Citizens, the Soviet Union, and the West* (New York, 2012).
[12] S. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge, 2011).

rights set out in the Helsinki Final Act. This international network comprised of dissidents, activists and politicians, is the focus of Snyder's work, in which she argues that this network, which developed from the Helsinki process, helped to shape the end of the Cold War. Whilst Snyder's argument is compelling, much like Peterson's thesis it lacks sufficient assessment of human rights organisations which are rightly argued to have played an important role. Both of these pieces, which challenge the traditional dominance of political figures in the historiography of the Cold War, fail to fully highlight the role of human rights organisations, and the important role that they played in political developments in the 1970s and 1980s.

There is a clear development in these scholars' work regarding the position of human rights activism. Thomas highlights the essential role played by human rights, focusing on how it influenced politicians. Peterson develops the importance of human rights by tentatively suggesting the importance of the private citizen and NGOs in US policy towards human rights violation. Snyder takes this one stage further by discussing the role played by Helsinki Groups, but they are portrayed as subtly influencing politicians, rather than dictating their direction. Whilst this is a slight nuance in the role played by these organisations, it is an important distinction to make with regards to both the relationship that they had with positions of power and their own political influence.

The study of human rights in the context of the Cold War is essentially an analysis of what the former US Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye has termed 'soft power'. Nye defines this power as 'resting on the ability to shape the preferences of others', something that groups from this period campaigned extensively for.[13] Whilst Nye's work considers the high politics of soft power, and how it has been utilised by governments and international organisations, smaller organisations can clearly attempt to use this form of power. Human rights groups in the Cold War utilised the soft power they had to influence governments and other organisations in order to assist Soviet dissidents.

[13] J. S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004) p.5.

Alongside the developing literature on the role of human rights in the Cold War, scholars have recently questioned the general approach to human rights. Robin Redhead and Nick Turnbull's recent article, 'Towards a Study of Human Rights Practitioners', argues that the concept of human rights is driven by activists and practitioners, rather than philosophical principles.[14] This philosophical approach to date has focused largely on the development of the ideological basis of human rights, rather than the explicit practice, campaigning for, and protection of these rights.[15] In the context of research into the Cold War, shifting the focus from the theoretical development of human rights towards an understanding of how these concepts were practically approached is essential in fully understanding the political context of the Cold War.

This thesis will develop the work of Thomas, Peterson and Snyder by assessing the role played by human rights activists in Britain, illustrating the key role they played in the British response to Soviet dissidents. It will show how groups formed in Britain in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s acted as a conduit for material on dissidents to reach the wider British society. In some cases this was through the direct translation and reproduction of *samizdat*, and other dissident material that had been smuggled to the West. Information on Soviet dissidents was also presented to the wider British public through a variety of reports and news bulletins produced by these groups, which often contained the most up-to-date information on dissidents. This was used by journalists, academics and politicians alike, and regularly contributed to the public discourse on dissidents. This is an important contribution to this literature as it illustrates how

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[14] R. Redhead and N. Turnbull, 'Towards a Study of Human Rights Practitioners', *Human Rights Review,* Vol. 12 (2011), pp. 173-189.

[15] There is a vast amount of literature on the historiography of human rights, and its theoretical development. See R. Afshari, 'On Historiography of Human Rights Reflections on Paul Gordon Lauren's The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2007), pp. 1-67; K. Cmiel, 'The Recent History of Human Rights', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 1 (February, 2004), pp. 117-136; J. Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights: In Theory & Practice* (New York, 2003); R. Dudai, 'The Long View: Human Rights Activism, Past and Present', *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2008), pp. 299-309; M. Freeman, *Human Rights* (Cambridge, 2002), especially pp. 32-75; S. Hertel, L. Scruggs and C. Patrick Heidkamp, 'Human Rights and Public Opinion: From Attitudes to Action', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 124, No. 3 (2009), pp. 443-459; L. Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights* (New York, 2007); P. Gordon Lauren, 'History and Human Rights: People and Forces in Paradoxical Interaction', *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2008), pp. 91-103; and M. Mutua, *Human Rights: A Political & Cultural Critique* (Pennsylvania, 2002). Marie-Bénédicte Dembour, 'What are Human Rights? Four Schools of Thought', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (February, 2010), pp. 1-20, is a particularly useful article on the theoretical background of the main strands of human rights scholarship.

these groups used a variety of different means to collate information on Soviet human rights violation, and repackaged it for the wider public, highlighting how influential they were in the political developments of the Cold War.

Whilst Britain was not the only nation to have developed movements that supported the Soviet dissidents in the Cold War, the British response to Soviet dissent is unique compared to other nations for a number of reasons.[16] Arguably, the most prominent distinction that these groups held in this period was a respect for the quality of research into the position of Soviet dissenters. Britain became home to research specialisms with human rights groups commanding international respect for their expertise, particularly on the Soviet abuse of psychiatry and the persecution of religious believers. The reason for this expertise is largely due to several key individuals that lived in Britain at this time, who formed organisations to research these areas and played a large part in their activism. The work of these individuals will be discussed in the course of this thesis, highlighting the key role that they played in the establishment, organisation, and the impact of these groups. This research came at a time when the concept of human rights, and perhaps more importantly the desire to campaign for the human rights of unknown others, came to the fore in British culture.

One can point to the response to the formation of Amnesty International in London in 1961, and its campaigns for the so-called 'forgotten prisoners', as the start of this wider human rights movement. To this day, Amnesty has established itself as the most important human rights organisation in the world, becoming synonymous with the concept of human rights in both the media and in wider British discourse. The first chapter of this thesis will consider how Amnesty highlighted the level of Soviet human rights violation, and how they campaigned on behalf of Soviet dissidents. This is a largely unexplored area as research to date on Amnesty's activism has overlooked the organisation's campaigning and research on the Soviet Union. This chapter will

[16] Human rights groups working for Soviet dissidents were particularly active in the United States, and several European countries. For examples of these campaigns, see G. Beckerman, *When They Come For Us We'll Be Gone: The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry* (New York, 2010); M. S. Christofferson, *French Intellectuals Against the Left: The Antitotalitarian Movement of the 1970s* (Oxford, 2004); and J. Laber, *The Courage of Strangers: Coming of Age with the Human Rights Movement* (New York, 2002).

argue that Amnesty's output on the Soviet Union had significant influence across British society. The translation and reproduction of the *samizdat* journal the *Chronicle of Current Events*, alongside the two editions of its own report *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* in 1975 and 1980, had a dramatic influence, offering detailed research and primary material to the media, academics and the general public alike. The reception of this material was strengthened by Amnesty's reputation for accuracy and reliability, something that it had seamlessly built up from its foundation. This chapter on Amnesty's research on the Soviet dissident movement will also highlight how productive and efficient its researchers were. Amnesty's Soviet researchers were few and far between in the period covered by this thesis. Despite this, the level of research they produced – including writing press releases, dealing with requests from Amnesty members, preparing material for campaigns, and translating *samizdat* – was staggering. That such a level of output was created by little more than two or three researchers is indicative of the commitment of these researchers.

Alongside Amnesty's research and campaigns on behalf of Soviet dissenters, other human rights groups were formed in Britain around a variety of different concerns. Two main issues – the political abuse of psychiatric treatment as a tool to persecute dissidents, and the state endorsed policy of atheism which directly persecuted religious believers – led to the formation of a variety of organisations. The second chapter of this thesis will consider the British response to the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, focusing on how the Royal College of Psychiatrists[17] was influenced by organisations such as the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry (MSCSJ), the Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals (Working Group), and the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse (CAPA). It will illustrate how the policy of official bodies such as the Royal College were directly influenced by human rights activists, who in some cases drove these organisations. It will assess the activities of the Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry (SCPAP), the Royal College of Psychiatrists' committee formed in response to reports of the abuse of psychiatric treatment in the Soviet

[17] The Royal College of Psychiatrists will be referred to as the 'Royal College' throughout this piece.

Union. It will show how individuals from human rights organisations held huge amounts of influence over this committee, something that gave them much authority over the Royal College's dealings with the Soviet All Union Society of Neuropathologists and Psychiatrists (AUSNP). Despite claims that the SCPAP would not develop links with human rights organisations, it is clear that by the early 1980s these groups held much influence over the direction of this committee.

The final chapter of this thesis will assess the British response to the Soviet persecution of religious believers, focusing on the efforts of two groups – Keston College and the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry (also known as the 35's). Studying these two organisations alongside each other enables analysis of how two different groups approached offering assistance to dissidents in the Soviet Union. Keston College, led by the activist Michael Bourdeaux, developed an internationally renowned research profile, and became a hub of information in the West about the state of religious belief in communist nations, with a particular focus on the Soviet Union. Keston collected a vast amount of material about the Soviet persecution of religious belief, and published an array of materials based on their research. Amongst these, its journal *Religion in Communist Lands* and its regular news circular the *Keston News Service*, both of which were used by journalists, academics and politicians alike, gave Keston significant influence over the public perception of religious belief in the Soviet Union. In direct contrast to Keston, the 35's were more akin to a stereotypical protest group. They regularly engaged in public protests and the stage invasions of cultural events with a particular flare. They became renowned for their elaborate methods, which included an array of fancy dress and publicity hungry displays in order to gain attention for their cause – attaining exit visas for *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union.[18] The 35's outlandish appearance was underpinned by serious research, mostly conducted in the form of the conversations Michael Sherbourne, one of the groups key supporters, engaged in with *refuseniks*.

[18] *Refuseniks* were Soviet Jews who applied for exit visas to emigrate to either Israel or another Western country, and were subsequently refused by the Soviet authorities. These *refuseniks* were subjected to persecution for their request to emigrate, including KGB surveillance and pressure, and the loss of employment. For more details on the *refusenik* movement see M. Altshuler, *Soviet Jewry Since the Second World War* (London, 1987); P. Buwalda, *'They Did Not Dwell Alone': Jewish Emigration from the Soviet Union 1967 – 1990* (Washington D. C., 1997); E. Drachman, *Challenging the Kremlin: The Jewish Movement for Freedom, 1967 – 1990* (New York, 1992); and L. P. Salitan, *Politics and Nationality in Contemporary Soviet-Jewish Emigration, 1968 – 89* (London, 1992).

This chapter will illustrate how although these two organisations appear different on face value, their activities were both underpinned research on collated primary source material.

Despite the differing outward approach that each of these human rights groups took in their campaigns, this thesis will demonstrate that they all held the same central basis for their activism. Each of these campaigns was based on the collation and distribution of information. This focus on empiricism was essential in the context of the Cold War, where propaganda from both sides of the Iron Curtain was produced to manipulate public opinion. By using evidence at the centre of their campaigns, these organisations attempted to step aside from this ideological conflict, and focus solely on the facts regarding the treatment of prisoners of conscience. The collation, and widespread distribution of information by these organisations gave them a reputation of expertise in this field, which lead to them being taken seriously by journalists and politicians alike.

The establishment of this reputation of expertise was particularly important on the influence that these human rights groups had on British cultural attitudes towards prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union. Through their activism, these groups held a significant amount of influence over the creation of the British discourse on Soviet dissenters. Public opinion on these dissenting figures in Britain was shaped by the information produced and distributed by these organisations. Not only did these groups reproduce *samizdat* materials produced by dissidents, but their reports were also highly influential on prominent journalists such as Bernard Levin who wrote regularly about Soviet dissidents in his column in *The Times*. This would have been impossible without the reputation of reliability that these groups developed over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, and it is clear that their campaigns would have been largely overlooked by the media without this reliability. Indeed, the establishment and protection of their reputation came to characterise the campaigns of many human rights organisations, something which undoubtedly contributed to their successes in influencing the public agenda.

Whilst this thesis is predominantly an analysis of the role of human rights groups, the role played by individual activists should not be overlooked. Indeed, the key role played by prominent individuals is telling of the function and direction of the organisations themselves, which were often extensions of the leading figures interests and concerns. In most cases, the fervour with which these groups functioned was dictated by the determination and vision of a single individual, or small group of like-minded figures. Indeed, the success of these organisations can be attributed to the hard work and willpower of these individuals and small groups. Even larger organisations, such as Amnesty International, were influenced heavily by the input of prominent individuals, who played a large part in shaping the group's output on the Soviet Union.

At first glance, the activities of the organisations formed in Britain in this period appear disparate, and focused primarily on separate issues. Indeed, the literature to date on this area, which will be examined more extensively in the course of this thesis, has tended to focus on the activity of individual organisations. Monographs and extensive pieces could be devoted solely to the actions of an individual organisation or activist discussed in the course of this thesis. However, this focused analysis loses the subtle relationships that these organisations had with each other. These organisations did not work in a vacuum; they shared information, and worked together on campaign demonstrations. In some instances, individuals were prominently involved in the organisation of more than one campaign. Taking this into account, the way in which these groups operated is best understood when they are considered alongside each other, rather than individually. Taking this approach highlights that these groups formed a wide network of activists, all striving towards a similar aim in supporting Soviet dissenters.

Beneath the high politics of the Cold War, there was the establishment of a network of concerned activists involved with human rights organisations, who responded to information they had received from the Soviet Union, and packaged it for wider public consumption. These organisations were at the forefront of establishing public consciousness in Britain regarding these human rights violations, spreading awareness of their plight at all levels of society. Indeed, human rights, and the efforts of organisations in highlighting where these rights had been abused, clearly

played a role in developing Anglo-Soviet relations in the 1970s and 1980s.[19] Sir Curtis Keeble, the British Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1978-1982, noted that,

> The subsequent 'human rights' strand of British policy, pursued both on an overtly governmental level and by private British organisations, was doubtless seen by the Soviet authorities as an attempt to influence the development of Soviet society and over the years it was a not insignificant element in the total relationship.[20]

Whilst this thesis focuses explicitly on the response of British human rights groups to Soviet dissenters, it also has implications for the literature to date on the Soviet dissident movement itself. The historiography on Soviet dissenters to date can be divided into two major areas, works that focus explicitly on an individual dissenter, predominantly in biographical form, and pieces that consider wider themes and issues within the movement.

The bulk of the scholarship available on the Soviet dissident movement is in the form of autobiographies of the dissidents themselves. These were translated and published widely in the West from the 1970s onwards and give an interesting insight into individual dissidents.[21] Alongside these memoirs, Western scholars have also produced a variety of biographies of dissidents. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, these included Michael Scammell's work on Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Sir Martin Gilbert's biography of Anatoly Shcharansky.[22] Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, an array of material has been made available to historians that

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[19] For more on the development of Anglo-Soviet relations in the twentieth century, see M. Hughes, *Inside the Enigma: British Officials in Russia, 1900-1939* (London, 1997); F. S. Northedge, and A. Wells, *Britain and Soviet Communism: The Impact of a Revolution* (London, 1982); A. Pravda, and P. J. S. Duncan, (ed.), *Soviet-British Relations Since the 1970s* (Cambridge, 1990); and B. White, *Britain, Détente and Changing East-West Relations* (London, 1992). For a wider historical discussion of Anglo-Russian relations, see M. S Anderson, *Britain's Discovery of Russia 1553-1815* (New York, 1958); J. H. Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion* (London, 1950); M. Hughes, 'Bernard Pares, Russian Studies and the Promotion of Anglo-Russian Friendship, 1907 – 14', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (2000), pp. 510-535; M. Hughes, 'British Opinion and Russian Terrorism in the 1880s', *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2011), pp. 255-277; M. Hughes, 'Searching for the Soul of Russia: British Perceptions of Russian during the First World War', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2009), pp. 198-226; and M. Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (London, 1992).

[20] C. Keeble, *Britain and the Soviet Union, 1917-1989* (London, 1990) p. 323.

[21] Examples of these memoirs include P. Grigorenko, *Memoirs* (London, 1983); A. Marchenko, *My Testimony* (London, 1969); V. Nekipelov, *Institute of Fools* (London, 1980); L. Plyushch, *History's Carnival* (London, 1979); A. Sakharov, *Memoirs*, (London, 1990); and A. Solzhenitsyn, *The Oak and the Calf* (London, 1980).

[22] M. Gilbert, *Shcharansky, Hero of Our Time* (London, 1986) and M. Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn – A Biography* (London, 1985). Anatoly Shcharansky changed his name to Natan Sharansky following his emigration to Israel in 1986. Given its focus, this thesis will use the pre-exile version of his name, in keeping with the literature of the time.

would have been impossible to access during the Cold War, including the ability to interview dissidents in Russia and other former Soviet nations.

Jay Bergman and Richard Lourie's biographies of Andrei Sakharov and Emma Gilligan's work on Sergei Kovalyov are examples of what can be considered as an emerging field of literature regarding Soviet dissenters.[23] Given the number of dissidents involved in political opposition both in the Soviet Union and countries in the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe, there is clearly potential for many more such biographical pieces. That leading dissident figures such as Elena Bonner, Vladimir Bukovsky, and Yury Orlov, amongst many others, have not had detailed accounts of their lives produced by historians is something that will undoubtedly be addressed in the coming years.[24]

Alongside work focused directly on the life and work of individual dissenters, there have been a variety of pieces written covering the wider scope of the dissident movement. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, works such as Joshua Rubenstein's *Soviet Dissidents: Their Struggle for Human Rights* were an attempt to understand the breadth of human rights groups in the USSR.[25] This literature has been expanded upon since the collapse of the Soviet Union, with works by scholars such as Philip Boobbyer and Robert Horvath that have focused on wider themes regarding dissidents in the Soviet Union, such as spirituality, nationality and their political thought.[26] These pieces can be seen as attempts to understand the dissident movement in the Soviet Union as a whole, seeking to identify common themes and influences that shaped them. Given the disparate nature of the Soviet nonconformism, this scholarship is focused

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[23] J. Bergman, *Meeting the Demands of Reason, The Life and Thought of Andrei Sakharov* (New York, 2009), R. Lourie, *Sakharov, A Biography* (Hanover, 2002), and E. Gilligan, *Defending Human Rights in Russia: Sergei Kovalyov, Dissident and Human Rights Commissioner 1969-2003* (Abingdon, 2004).

[24] All three of these dissidents have produced lengthy memoirs of their activism, see E. Bonner, *Alone Together* (London, 1986); V. Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle* (London, 1978); and Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts.* Philip Boobbyer has recently written an article on the political thought of Vladimir Bukovsky that goes some way to address his life as a dissident. See P. Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovsky and Soviet Communism', *Slavonic and East European Review.* Vol. 87, No. 3 (2009), pp. 452-487.

[25] J. Rubenstein, *Soviet Dissidents: Their Struggle for Human Rights* (Boston, 1985).

[26] P. Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (Abingdon, 2005); R. Horvath, *The Legacy of Soviet Dissent: Dissidents, Democratisation and Radical Nationalism in Russia* (Abingdon, 2005); and R. Horvath, '"The Solzhenitsyn Effect": East European Dissidents and the Demise of the Revolutionary Privilege', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 29 (2007), pp. 879-907.

predominantly on overarching themes linked to the dissidents, rather than the specific political thought of individual figures.

This thesis is particularly important for the historiography of Soviet dissent as it places the struggle of these individuals into a wider context, internationalising their position. It must be made clear that this thesis is not an analysis of Soviet dissenters themselves; however, it does contribute to scholarship on this area by reasserting the role played by British human rights activists. In order to fully understand the Soviet dissident movement it is essential to recognise that their plight did not occur in a domestic vacuum, but that it was directly connected to an international community that was concerned about their plight.

The efforts of the dissidents in the Soviet Union were intertwined with the work of human rights organisations and activists in the West. In certain cases, such as those of the prominent human rights campaigner Vladimir Bukovsky, and the Soviet psychiatrists Marina Voikhanskaya and Alexander Voloshanovich, some dissidents became actively involved with human rights organisations in Britain after being exiled from the Soviet Union, further blurring the distinction between activists in the two countries. It is therefore impossible to fully understand the dissident movement in the Soviet Union without taking into account the human rights activism working on its behalf that was developing in nations such as Britain at the same time. The analysis of British human rights groups not only emphasises the important role that they played, but it also internationalises the Soviet dissident movement, highlighting that it is essential to consider their efforts in a global context.

Note on Sources

Given its scope, this thesis will utilise a variety of differing types of primary material. The bulk of this material is from the archival repositories of the individual organisations studied, including Amnesty International, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, and Keston College. In these instances, the archival material of these organisations has been largely well preserved. This is due in part to sufficient finance and interest needed to keep such large collections intact. Despite this, there are inevitable cases where archival materials have been lost. The vast majority of the papers of the prominent Soviet Jewry activist Michael Sherbourne, for example, were destroyed in the 1970s when they were being moved from flooded offices in heavy rainfall.[27] These papers included transcripts of Sherbourne's many conversations with *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union that provided much of the information used by British Soviet Jewry organisations formed in this period, such as the 35's. A full list of archival repositories used can be found in the appendices to this work.

The types of materials found in these collections and used in this research varies between each archive. In most cases, internal correspondence and the minutes of meetings were the most prominently used materials. These give an interesting insight in to the day to day operations of these organisations, highlighting in some instances disagreements between members regarding policy, which can be readily corroborated against other materials. These internal documents were used alongside the external publications of each organisation which in some cases far outweighed the number of internal documents. Amnesty International, for example, produced a variety of external publications such as news releases and calls for urgent action. Other organisations, such as Keston College, produced regular journals and books which formed the bulk of their activism. The external publication of these organisations was one of the key links between these groups and their wider audience, and as such have been considered in substantial depth.

[27] Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.

Alongside archival repositories and the publications produced by human rights groups, the research for this thesis also included a series of interviews conducted between September 2009 and October 2011 with individuals who were actively involved with these human rights organisations. Interviews were based around two wide reaching questions put to interviewees:

- How were they involved with British groups campaigning for Soviet dissenters?
- How did they feel their efforts were received?

These questions allowed the interviewee to discuss their involvement with British human rights organisations, providing a narrative on the group and their own personal activism. It also allowed them to reflect on how effective they felt their work was, and how it was received by different aspects of society, which produced quite emotive responses from some interviewees. Conducting interviews in this manner allowed a flexible approach that could be applied to differing individuals involved with different organisations.

These interviews had two main purposes for this thesis. Firstly, they were used to highlight the interviewee's perception of their activism, and allowed them to discuss their own opinion of their efforts. This has added much colour to the subject of campaigning against human rights violation which can, at times, be an impersonal and harrowing subject to research. It is essential to remember that in some cases these activists were emotionally involved in their efforts, campaigning on behalf of individuals with whom they built deep and lasting relationships that in some cases put their safety at risk. Use of these interviews adds this extra dimension to this research.

Secondly, and perhaps most usefully for this research, these interviews were used to identify other areas of primary material that could be used in this study. Whilst this was not always the case, the majority of these interviews opened avenues of enquiry that would have been unconsidered without the personal suggestions of those interviewed. The personal expertise of these individuals was clear from their suggestions for further work, which has undoubtedly improved the quality of this thesis. This was in some cases access to personal papers, in other

cases the identification of archival material. It is important to note that these interviews were not the main source of information used in this thesis, and have been used primarily to supplement other primary materials. Whilst this thesis has employed elements of oral history in developing interview technique, this is not a oral history thesis.[28] A list of those interviewed, and more details of individual interviews, can be found at the end of this thesis.

[28] There is a large, and growing, body of literature about the use of oral history. For example, see R. Perks and A. Thomson (ed.) *The Oral History Reader* (Second Edition: London, 2006), and L. Adams, *Oral History Theory* (London, 2010).

Chapter 1

Amnesty International and Soviet Dissent

The basic idea of Amnesty International is to depoliticise the concepts of the civil and political rights of the individual, the impermissibility of torture and other forms of inhuman treatment of persons. Since time immemorial these concepts have been treated as in the political sphere. Amnesty International has brought them in to the sphere of universal morality, the sphere of spiritual culture. It is a paradox: how is it possible to depoliticise the concept of **political** rights? Yet this is what Amnesty International does.

The Inertia of Fear, Valentin Turchin,[29]

It is with a feeling of disgust that one turns over the pages of Amnesty International's reports on "prisoners of conscience" and other similar materials which can seem to be woven from a cobweb of little lies interspersed with big lies.

The Anatomy of Lies, Samuil Zivs[30]

The concept of human rights in British society in the twentieth century has been largely shaped by the activities and campaigns of Amnesty International.[31] Amnesty is undoubtedly the world's most respected and renowned human rights organisation. It recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation, and it occupies a unique position amongst human rights organisations for its large membership and esteemed history. Amnesty has developed an unrivalled international reputation for its work, becoming synonymous with human rights campaigning and the term 'prisoner of conscience' which was coined by the organisation.

Since its formation in May 1961 after the British lawyer Peter Benenson published an appeal for amnesty entitled 'The Forgotten Prisoners' in *The Observer*, Amnesty has developed a reputation that commands respect from national governments and international organisations alike.[32] As the Soviet dissenter Valentin Turchin notes in *The Inertia of Fear*, Amnesty attempted to depoliticise the concept of human rights, something that had previously been considered as a uniquely political concept. Its efforts alongside other organisations in this period shifted the

[29] 'Translation of an excerpt from 'The Inertia of Fear' by Valentin Turchin', Amnesty International Executive Committee (IEC) document 152, [POL 06/IEC 02/79], *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis* (IISG), Amsterdam, Netherlands. Amnesty use a coding system for their archival material, giving a unique number for individual documents. Details of this system are given in Appendix 1.

[30] S. Zivs, *The Anatomy of Lies*, (Moscow, 1982) p. 35. This is a propaganda piece produced by the Soviet authorities to attack Amnesty International. It will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

[31] This thesis will refer to Amnesty International as 'Amnesty' throughout.

[32] P. Benenson, 'The Forgotten Prisoners', *The Observer*, 28 May 1961.

concept of human rights firmly to, as Turchin puts it, the 'sphere of universal morality'.[33] This is a dramatic shift that has significantly shaped the contemporary Western world, and has given rise to human rights legislation and guarantees in many countries internationally.

Given the universal respect for its work as a human rights organisation, and its involvement in publicising cases of human rights violation in the Soviet Union, Amnesty is an essential organisation to consider in the response to Soviet dissenters by British human rights groups. In the 1970s and 1980s it published widely on Soviet human rights abuses. These publications included the translation of the important *samizdat* journal the *Chronicle of Current Events* and its own report *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*. This material shaped the British perception of Soviet dissent, and was widely utilised by journalists, academics, and human rights activists in their work on these dissidents.

Despite this important role, there has been no comment to date on Amnesty's efforts in publicising and campaigning against the human rights violation in the Soviet Union. Given the central role that Amnesty has played in the international development of human rights in the twentieth century, it is important that its response to the Soviet Union – one of the most serious abusers of universal human rights in the twentieth century – is fully understood.

It is telling that of the scholarship on Amnesty's response to Soviet human rights abuses, the most informative pieces are two programs on the history of the organisation produced by the BBC. 'The Future of Amnesty International' was a two part radio programme broadcast on the BBC World Service in September 2011.[34] It covered the development of the organisation from Benenson's initial idea to form an organisation through to its current guise. The first edition of this programme devoted substantial time to discussion of Amnesty's response to Soviet human rights violations, which included an interview with the Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky. 'Amnesty! When They Are All Free' was broadcast on BBC4 in May 2011, and similarly contains

[33] Turchin, 'The Inertia of Fear'.
[34] 'The Future of Amnesty International', first broadcast on BBC World Service on 13 September 2011. Available at, http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00jf3yz [accessed 24 October 2011].

interviews with Bukovsky on Amnesty's campaigns on the Soviet Union.[35] These two programmes were part of the wider media coverage given to Amnesty in 2011, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the group's foundation. This included an array of newspaper comment on Amnesty's first half century, and was largely positive about the groups work.[36]

Despite the recent interest in Amnesty's history, and in the campaigns it has conducted, there is no one work that can be considered as a good history of the organisation. No work has considered Amnesty's history in extensive detail, something which is surprising given the international reputation of the group. There are pieces that have considered aspects of Amnesty's history, but none have sought to place Amnesty into the context of the international political developments of the twentieth century. The reason for this gap in the literature is twofold. Firstly, the sheer scope of Amnesty's work in campaigning against human rights abuses around the world mean that a history of the organisation would require an author to have a working knowledge of an enormous amount of primary source material. Amnesty's internal archives, housed at the *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis*[37] (IISG) in Amsterdam are voluminous in both paper and microfilm collections. The collection at the IISG needs to be considered alongside other Amnesty archival collections, such as repositories at the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick and the large microfiche anthology produced by the Dutch publishers IDC, both of which are extensive in their own rights. A project on the 'complete' history of Amnesty would be an enormous one which would undoubtedly be the life's work of a keen scholar. The scale of such a project is likely to have deterred historians from approaching Amnesty's work in its entirety, going some way to suggest why such a history has not been produced to date. Secondly, given the emotive nature of Amnesty's ongoing work, it is likely that those interested in the history of the

[35] 'Amnesty! When they are All Free', first broadcast on BBC4 on 31 May 2011, programme information available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011m9cx, video available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bn04cBOYz7g [accessed 9 July 2012].

[36] For example see *The New Review, The Observer*, 3 April 2011, which contained a 12 page special on Amnesty's half century; T. McVeigh, 'Front: Amnesty marks 50 year of fighting to free world's prisoners of conscience: An article in the Observer in 1961 led to the setting up of the group that has become a champion of human rights', *The Observer*, 29 May 2011, p. 3; and P. Bignell, 'Amnesty 50 years of fighting for human rights', *The Independent on Sunday*, 29 May 2011, p. 28.

[37] International Institute of Social History.

organisation are also concerned with its current campaigns. Those who might be interested in researching the history of this group may become more concerned with the contemporary concerns of the organisation and devote their attention there.

Whilst these two reasons may have dissuaded scholars from approaching a general history of Amnesty, this is not to suggest that Amnesty has been ignored entirely by historians in recent years. Of the recent scholarship of the organisation, the works of three authors stand out. Tom Buchanan's article 'The Truth Will Set You Free': The Making of Amnesty International' discusses the founding years of Amnesty, stressing the importance of the international context of the Cold War in the groups formation.[38] This article outlines the early years of Amnesty, exploring how it developed from Benenson's original vision into an established human rights organisation by the end of the 1960s. Buchanan's article neatly shows how Amnesty was not born solely out of the work of one man, as has sometimes been suggested, but by a plethora of concerned individuals. He argues that Benenson was assisted and inspired by individuals such as Sean McBride, Louis Blom Cooper, Eric Baker and Frank Buchman, and that Amnesty was born out of the ideas of these men.[39] Buchanan has also written a second article on the early years of Amnesty, detailing a tense period in the development of the organisation. 'Amnesty International in Crisis, 1966-7' discusses the events of the mid 1960s, where it was alleged that Amnesty had been infiltrated by British intelligence, and that it was being used to channel secret funds in Rhodesia.[40] This piece can easily be read alongside 'The Truth Will Set You Free', and neatly shows how Amnesty's initial enthusiasm was dampened by these accusations. It is also a revealing piece about the personalities that surrounded Amnesty in its early years, casting Benenson as extremely paranoid and out of control of the organisation that he had founded. Whilst these two pieces by Buchanan are articles from specialist academic journals, read together they arguably provide one

[38] T. Buchanan, 'The Truth Will Set You Free': The Making of Amnesty International', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Oct. 2002) pp. 577, 579, 584, and 595.
[39] Buchanan, 'The Truth Will Set You Free', pp. 581-2, 584-6, 589, and 595.
[40] T. Buchanan, 'Amnesty International in Crisis, 1966-7', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2004), pp. 267-289.

of the best accounts of Amnesty's early years. This is revealing both of their quality and the lack of extended scholarship on Amnesty's history.

Stephen Hopgood's *Keepers of the Flame*, although focusing on contemporary debates about the direction of Amnesty's work in the early 2000s, contains substantial analysis of its development. Hopgood places these debates about Amnesty's work into an historical context, clearly illustrating the impact that its composition in earlier years has had on its current researchers resistance to changing practice.[41] Hopgood's piece extensively analyses the basis of justification for Amnesty's work, seeking essentially to identify why those who work for Amnesty do what they do. He notes that the complex structures and working methods of Amnesty are best understood as a secular religion, with primary concern on relations between human beings rather than with a divine being.[42] This is a neat way of describing the impact that Amnesty's ethos has on its membership and the direction of the organisation.

Firstly, the description of Amnesty as a secular religion alludes to the influence that its central body had over its membership in the West, something that it has arguably maintained to this day with a significant proportion of the British public. Secondly, inferring that an organisation operates as a religion suggests that it has a set of devoted followers, something that can clearly be seen in the dedication of Amnesty's membership. Finally, association with religion implies a sense of self-declared moral purity, a reputation that Amnesty have sought to maintain throughout its existence despite several high-profile scandals, which despite having short term ramifications for the organisation have not had lasting effects. Each of these areas can be considered as key components of Amnesty's success in its campaigns, using its mass membership to support campaigns that are widely held as being conducted in a moral way.

As will be seen throughout this thesis, the success of human rights organisations that campaigned against the persecution of dissenters in the Soviet Union relied on developing a relationship with the public which ensured that their publications and output were trusted.

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[41] S. Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty international* (Ithaca, 2006).
[42] Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame* p. 71.

Indeed, the maintenance of a reputation of reliability was often more important for these groups than finance or personnel. Amnesty's position as the first major international human rights organisation contributed significantly to its reputation, being the first prominent group to identify and support political prisoners around the world. On the issue of Soviet dissenters, Amnesty developed this reputation through publishing an array of material on human rights violations which was empirically grounded. This was a particularly impressive feat given the difficulties in not only attaining information from behind the Iron Curtain, but also in assessing its reliability, especially so given the level of propaganda that emanated from the Soviet Union in this period. This reputation was particularly important for the reception of Amnesty's reports on the Soviet Union by the press, who used this material extensively in their reporting. As will be discussed later in this chapter, some journalists were very complementary about Amnesty's publications on the Soviet Union, something that in turn enhanced the groups reputation further.

Keepers of the Flame deftly illustrates the background in which Amnesty developed, and how the group responded to the array of political developments at the end of the Cold War. Despite this, it offers little in the way of historical analysis of the group. With a subtitle alluding to its most useful purpose, Hopgood's work is a good piece for developing an understanding of Amnesty, especially in its contemporary guise. Although of much use in assessing the history of the organisation it is not, and does not claim to be, a history of Amnesty International.

Jonathon Power's *Like Water on Stone* is the most informative piece on the historical development of Amnesty as a human rights organisation to date.[43] This, however, does not mean that it is flawless. Power has structured this work around a series of personal recollections of the influence of Amnesty in cases of human rights abuse, and has interjected it with more sustained analysis of the role of the organisation. Power uses case studies of Amnesty's response to human rights abuses in different countries to illustrate their role, and how they have conducted their work since the group's formation. Whilst this piece clearly illustrates the compassion that Power felt for Amnesty and the importance of its work, it feels disjointed in the extreme. Discussion of

[43] J. Power, *Like Water on Stone: The Story of Amnesty International* (London, 2002).

the first forty years of the organisation starts in the forth chapter, over a hundred pages into the book. This occurs after three chapters and a prologue on Amnesty's work in Nigeria, Guatemala, the Central African Republic and Chile, all of which appear to be based heavily on Power's personal interests and involvement. Whilst this lengthy analysis of Amnesty's foundation and the struggle in its early years is interesting and thorough, it feels as if it has been parachuted into a book of case studies and personal recollections. Power's claim that this piece is 'the story of Amnesty International' is also very ambitious and a great exaggeration. Whilst coverage of Amnesty's work in countries such as China, the United States and Northern Ireland appears to be thorough, the distinct lack of reference to either the Soviet Union or Russia is remarkable. Amnesty's response to Soviet prisoners of conscience was – as this chapter will show – extensive, yet Power scarcely mentions the Soviet Union in this work. There are only nine references to the Soviet Union in *Like Water on Stone*, most of which are in reference to other issues such as human rights abuses in the United States. This is a staggering omission. Given the international concern for human rights in the course of the Cold War, the context that Amnesty was born into and developed in, a lack of a chapter on the Soviet Union is inexcusable in a piece that claims to outline the story of Amnesty.

Power's approach to Amnesty's history was criticised by reviewers on its release in 2001. Joan Smith's review of the book for *The Independent* recognises that whilst it is a very readable book, it is more often a history of human rights in the twentieth century than a history of Amnesty. Smith notes that the task set by Power's title was a 'near impossible brief', and that instead of matching this he has produced something resembling a long magazine article.[44] *Like Water on Stone*, as Smith rightly points out, is a very readable piece that falls well short of what it claims to be. Criticism of Power's work should be measured alongside the scope and difficulty in writing Amnesty's history. A piece that claims to cover the bulk of Amnesty's history is hugely

[44] J. Smith, 'Review: Like Water on Stone: the story of Amnesty International by Jonathon Power', *The Independent*, 25 May 2001. Available at http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/like-water-on-stone-the-story-of-amnesty-international-by-jonathan-power-685995.html [accessed 18 April 2011].

ambitious, given the scope of the organisations work and the scale of archival material relating to its activities.

It is perhaps inevitable that there will be much more scholarship on the history of Amnesty in the future. Its work for prisoners of conscience around the world drew, and continues to draw international attention and a substantial membership of over 3 million people.[45] Amnesty's importance in international relations shows little signs of fading 50 years after its formation. When this international interest in Amnesty is timed with the extensive amount of empirical material produced by the group in the form of publications and news releases, it becomes clear that it is a human rights organisation rife for historical analysis.

There is a clear gap in the literature on Amnesty's history, with much scope for an extended piece on the general history of the organisation. This would undoubtedly be a demanding piece given the scope of Amnesty's activities, but one that undoubtedly needs writing. Whilst it is far beyond the scope of this thesis to do this, this piece does develop the historiography of the organisation by discussing its Soviet campaigns. This is important, as it highlights the influential work of this organisation, and the impact that it had on wide perceptions on the Soviet Union by journalists and activists alike – something that has been ignored by the literature to date. This is most explicit in Power's work, which claims to be a history of the organisation but ignores the important work that Amnesty conducted on human rights abuses in the Soviet Union.

This chapter will utilise an array of source material in order to analyse Amnesty's response to human rights violation in the USSR, focusing particularly on its publications and news releases. Amnesty produced a vast amount of documentation on Soviet prisoners of conscience from the early 1970s onwards. This is due in part to manner in which Amnesty operated, researching human rights abuse and publishing their findings *en masse*. As a result and perhaps unusually for an organisation of this size, there is not a singular archival collection that can be

[45] Amnesty International, 'Who we are', available at http://www.amnesty.org/en/who-we-are [accessed 18 April 2011].

used to assess Amnesty's work on the Soviet Union. Instead material from a variety of archives and publications must be consulted and interwoven to create a narrative of Amnesty's efforts. This chapter will use material from three main repositories – the Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick; a microfiche collection produced by the Dutch Publishers IDC held at Marylebone Library, London;[46] and the Amnesty collections at the IISG, Amsterdam. The Modern Records Centre and the IDC microfiche collection predominantly contain external reports produced by Amnesty, including press releases and campaign material on prisoners of conscience from the mid 1970s to 2009. The Amnesty archive at the IISG contains internal Amnesty documents, including correspondence between leading members, minutes of policy meetings, and internal reports from the late 1960s onwards. Aside from yearly reports, archival material on Amnesty's activity in the 1960s is scarce. This is probably due to the manner of the organisation, which worked in cramped conditions with few staff in the early 1960s. As the first Soviet prisoner of conscience that caught attention in Britian in this period was Yevgeny Belov in 1965, this omission of materials does not hinder research of Amnesty's approach to the Soviet Union.[47]

This chapter will begin by offering a general outline of the functions of Amnesty, briefly discussing the early years of the organisation and the formation of its powerful ethos. This ethos is important to take into account when considering Amnesty's work. This underlying moral force has come to dominate the direction that this organisation has taken since the 1970s, even at the expense of its founding figure who was forced to leave the organisation in embarrassing circumstances.[48] Understanding how this ethos developed will offer a sense of context with which to place analysis of its efforts regarding the Soviet Union against. This chapter shall then focus directly on Amnesty's approach to the human rights violations in the Soviet Union, focusing predominantly on the publications of the organisation. Amnesty's publications on the Soviet

[46] For finding aids for the IDC collection see IDC Publishers, *Amnesty International's Country Dossiers and Publications, 1962-2008 Finding Aid* (2010), available at http://www.idc.nl./ead/127.xml [accessed 17 March 2011]. Details of Amnesty's output on the Soviet Union is detailed at http://www.idc.nl/ead//ead.php?faid=127-03.xml [accessed 17 March 2011].

[47] For more on Belov's case see S. Bloch and P. Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals* (London, 1977) pp. 68-70.

[48] Buchanan, 'Amnesty International in Crisis'.

Union played a key part in its campaigns, and had wide reaching impacts on the British response to the human rights violations behind the Iron Curtain. This chapter will thoroughly assess the impact and importance of two of its main publications – the translation of the *samizdat* journal the *Chronicle of Current Events*, and the report *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions*. The final section of this chapter will consider Amnesty's Soviet researchers, showing how their role developed as Amnesty's wider research department grew and became more professional. It will show the personal sacrifices that these researchers made, and show the increasingly difficult circumstances in which they were working.

Early Years

In order to understand Amnesty's approach to the Soviet Union, it is essential to fully understand the group's foundation and early years, a period that had significant impact on the direction of the organisation. Amnesty was formed by the British barrister Peter Benenson in response to a report of two Portuguese students who had been imprisoned in Lisbon by the Salazar dictatorship for making a public toast to freedom.[49] Benenson wrote a short article entitled 'The Forgotten Prisoners' for *The Observer*, which started what was initially anticipated to be a year-long campaign to draw attention to prisoners of conscience around the world.[50] 1961 was considered to be a particularly apt year for this appeal, coming a century after the emancipation of the serfs in Russia and the freeing of slaves in the United States, two events that greatly developed the concept of inviolable human rights around the world.[51] Benenson's article also set out several principles that were to guide the development of Amnesty's ethos. Perhaps the most important principle set out in 'The Forgotten Prisoners' was the centrality of freedom of conscience to Amnesty's ethos. Benenson used Voltaire's famous utterance 'I detest your views, but am prepared to die for your right to express them' to describe the conviction that brought

[49] Power, *Like Water on Stone*, pp. 119-120.
[50] Power, *Like Water on Stone*, p. 120, and P. Benenson, 'The Forgotten Prisoners', *The Observer*, 28 May 1961.
[51] Power, *Like Water on Stone*, p. 120.

Amnesty's founding members together.[52] Taking this into account, it is of no surprise that Amnesty described people imprisoned for their political stance as 'prisoners of conscience' – an evocative term that has become entrenched in British discourse through the activities of Amnesty and other human rights organisations in this period.

The Forgotten Prisoners

ON BOTH SIDES of the Iron Curtain, thousands of men and women are being held in gaol without trial because their political or religious views differ from those of their Governments. Peter Benenson, a London lawyer, conceived the idea of a world campaign, APPEAL FOR AMNESTY, 1961, to urge Governments to release these people or at least give them a fair trial.

Image 1.1 – Peter Benenson, 'The Forgotten Prisoners', *The Observer*, 28 May 1961

'The Forgotten Prisoners' was received with much acclaim in Britain and internationally. It was reprinted simultaneously in *Le Monde*, and a variety of newspapers from around the world reported the appeal in subsequent editions. A Spanish newspaper even mentioned the appeal despite the risk of repercussions from the Franco regime.[53] The initial success and public interest in this year long campaign in both Britain and around the world led to its extension into a permanent movement which expanded internationally and still thrives to this day. 'The Forgotten Prisoners' is essentially Amnesty's founding document, and has come to represent the early ethos of the organisation. The evocative cartoon of a prisoner behind bars, alongside portraits of the initial six prisoners of conscience, as shown in Image 1.1, is deeply symbolic of Benenson's initial call for Amnesty.

[52] Benenson, 'The Forgotten Prisoners'.
[53] Power, *Like Water on Stone* p. 121.

'The Forgotten Prisoners' also identifies the prisoners of conscience that Benenson wanted Amnesty to support, defining them as:

> Any person who is physically restrained (by imprisonment or otherwise) from expressing (in any form of words or symbols) any opinion which he honestly holds and which does not advocate or condone personal violence.[54]

This definition clearly excluded any individual that either used, or promoted the use of violence. This was an approach based on Benenson's moral philosophy, and may have been influenced by his faith and interactions with the prominent Quaker Eric Baker, who played a large role in the formation of Amnesty.[55] This provision, which excluded Amnesty's support from those who endorsed violence, came to the fore in 1964 when one of its adopted prisoners of conscience, the South African activist Nelson Mandela, advocated the use of violence as a part of his activism. Amnesty decided that his use of violence meant they were unable to support him, and whilst they continued a campaign for his release, this was not as one of their prisoners of conscience – a decision endorsed by a poll of its membership after a long, and far-reaching internal debate.[56] This position of non-violence became one of the driving forces of Amnesty's work, only tarnished by its involvement in its support for members of the Baader-Meinhoff group in the 1970s. Amnesty's support for members of this group can be seen as one of the most challenging issues in the organisation's history, something that greatly effected its public image in the West at the time.[57]

Prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union provided an interesting test to Amnesty's commitment of only supporting prisoners of conscience who did not endorse the use of violence. This became problematic for supporting prisoners of conscience who were, or had been members of the communist party or had a communist political leaning. It was argued that any political endorsement of communism was in fact a notion of support for the use of violence. This was due

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[54] Benenson, 'The Forgotten Prisoners'.
[55] Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame,* p. 56; Power, *Like Water on Stone* p. 120.
[56] Power, *Like Water on Stone*, p. 125.
[57] For more on Amnesty's involvement in supporting members of the Baader-Meinhoff group see Power, *Like Water on Stone,* pp. 182-190.

to the Marxist doctrine that oppressive bourgeois governments should be overthrown by force including, if necessary, the use of violent measures. This created a problem for supporting dissidents such as General Petro Grigorenko, who had been both a high ranking member of the Red Army and the Communist party. The position of the Communist party in the Soviet Union also further complicated this issue, with many people joining the party simply to further their career and reap the benefits of being part of the *nomenklatura*. The same can be seen in contemporary China, where young people often join the Communist party as a right of passage to a better life rather than for any ideological conviction.[58] A discussion paper from the University of Nottingham's China Policy Institute suggests that membership of the communist party is directly linked to an increased wage premium, something that would have undoubtedly been similar in the Soviet Union.[59]

Peter Benenson responded directly to this issue in a circular to national sections in May 1964, in which he noted that over a century had passed since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* and that conditions had changed dramatically from the early days of Marxist ideology. He urged local groups to use their initiative, judging cases on their individual merits and not to abandon a prisoner of conscience because 'he happens to be called a communist'. Indeed, Benenson noted in this circular that in many cases, Government officials had libelled political opponents by calling them communists, further highlighting the need for each case involving a communist to be individually assessed.[60] This circular is important for Amnesty's response to Soviet dissent for two reasons. Firstly, given that it was circulated in May 1964 meant that the issue of Communist party membership was effectively dealt with before the plight of Soviet dissenters had become a serious issue in international relations. This allowed Amnesty to work on

[58] Some commentators have described this as shocking the well-educated into compliance with the regime in return for career and business opportunities. See J. Lee, 'How China bought its graduates' loyalty', *The Guardian*, 8 December 2008, Comment is Free (online), available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/dec/08/china-graduates-credit-crunch [accessed 24 October 2011].

[59] See S. Appleton, J. Knight, L. Song and Q. Xia, 'The economics of Communist Party membership – the curious case of rising numbers and wage premium during China's transition' November 2005, available at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cpi/documents/discussion-papers/discussion-paper-2-economics-of-communist-party-membership.pdf [accessed 24 October 2011].

[60] P. Benenson, 'Communist "Prisoners of Conscience"', May 1964, Amnesty Indexed Documents no. 427, IISG [POL 30/64].

behalf of prisoners of conscience who had been, or were, members of communist groups without hindrance. Secondly, Benenson's circular outlined the case by case approach to prisoners of conscience that was to continue throughout the ideological battlefield of the Cold War. This allowed Amnesty to continue their work for prisoners of conscience without directly becoming involved in the political conflict itself. Political impartiality was particularly important for Amnesty, which regularly highlighted that it stood aside from ideological conflicts, and showed concern only for the human rights of persecuted individuals. This was important in the group's dealings with the Soviet Union, as it heightened the group's reputation, and that of the material it produced – something that set this group apart from other political organisations in this period. This impartial approach allowed politicians and journalists to utilise Amnesty material without accusation of political bias.

The decision not to support those who endorsed violence was notable in Amnesty's campaigns in the Soviet Union. This stance led Amnesty to refuse to support the *refuseniks* involved in the so-called 'Leningrad plot' in June 1970, despite the worldwide attention that their treatment gained.[61] Two of those involved, Mark Dymshits and Eduard Kuznetsov were sentenced to death with five others sentenced to long terms in prison. The case received international publicity, and protests from the West led to the death sentences being reduced to terms of imprisonment. Amnesty refused to become involved in these protests due to the use of violence by these *refuseniks* who had attempted to hijack an aeroplane to escape from the Soviet Union. This, however, was an unusual approach from dissenting groups in the Soviet Union in this period and the Dymshits-Kuznetsov affair was one of very few instances where the use of violence prevented Amnesty from supporting Soviet dissenters. The Leningrad plot was undoubtedly a unique case in the history of the *refusenik* movement and in wider Soviet dissenting circles, in its

[61] The Leningrad plot was the attempt by a small group of *refuseniks* to hijack a small aeroplane, and fly it to Sweden in an attempt to leave the Soviet Union. They were caught by the Soviet authorities, and tried in December 1970 for a variety of crimes, including treason, which was punishable by death. For further details of the Leningrad plot, also referred to as the Dymshits-Kuznetsov affair, see Amnesty International, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR, Their Treatment and Conditions*, (London, 1980) p. 87; M. Gilbert, *Shcharansky* (London, 1986) pp. 18-20; M. Azbel, *Refusenik: Trapped in the Soviet Union* (London, 1982) pp. 234-238; and G. Beckerman, *When They Come For Us We'll Be Gone: The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry* (New York, 2010) pp. 172-207.

avocation and attempted use of violence. Andrei Sakharov discusses the affair in detail in his memoirs, in which he noted that there was doubt as to whether it was a human rights issue as such. In a telegram he sent to Brezhnev asking for a commutation of the death penalties passed on Dymshits and Kuznetsov, Sakharov clearly notes his condemnation of their plan.[62] It was clear in this instance that Amnesty's stand against the use of violence was shared by several high profile dissidents in the Soviet Union, one of many similarities the organisation was to share with human rights circles behind the Iron Curtain.

Amnesty's development from humble beginnings in Benenson's cramped barristers office in the basement of Mitre Court, London, to the respected position that it now holds occurred with apparent ease over a short period of time.[63] This is not to suggest that this occurred without any controversies. The most damaging period for the organisation itself were the events of 1966-67 which Tom Buchanan has analysed in detail.[64] In this period accusations that British intelligence had funded Amnesty using secret government funds shook the composition of the group's leadership.[65] Given the lengths that Amnesty went to in order to establish political impartiality, these accusations could have potentially destroyed the group's reputation. Direct financial links to the British government would have significantly weakened Amnesty campaigns against Soviet human rights violations, as the organisation could be dismissed as being a stooge of the British government. Benenson became increasingly paranoid of those around him, and was eventually forced to leave his position as President. Perhaps the most damaging aspect of Benenson's actions in this period was that they occurred publicly, which allowed Amnesty's reputation to be questioned. Amnesty members who worked at the International Secretariat were notified in a memo from Sean MacBride and Eric Baker, two prominent members of Amnesty's hierarchy, that if Benenson came to Amnesty's office, staff were to inform him that 'he ha[d] no authority to act,

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[62] Sakharov, *Memoirs*, p. 323.

[63] Amnesty produced a short video covering their history which was uploaded to their YouTube account in March 2008. It contains an array of interesting footage of the early days of the organisation, including its offices at Mitre Court, London. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKftcnkoY-o [Accessed 14 October 2011].

[64] Buchanan, 'Amnesty International in Crisis'.

[65] Buchanan, 'Amnesty International in Crisis', pp. 271-283.

speak or issue any instructions on behalf of Amnesty International', something that was undoubtedly a dramatic fall from grace and a personal embarrassment.[66] These accusations of political manipulation and funding continued to be attached to Amnesty by those critical of its efforts, especially from the Soviet bloc and its supporters. In October 1979 TASS, the Soviet news agency, criticised Amnesty of being an anti-Soviet organisation, and with spreading misinformation, playing on the events of 1966-67 and its reported links with British intelligence.[67]

Despite the publicity attained by the suspicion of secret government funding, Amnesty came out of this scandal relatively unscathed having little impact on the group's authority in the period that immediately followed this controversy. This is somewhat remarkable when it is considered that organisations such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom were effectively ended once funding from the American intelligence agencies was revealed.[68]The probable reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, the international response to Benenson's call for Amnesty in 'The Forgotten Prisoners' suggests that Amnesty's ethos and *raison d'etre* were far stronger than the fallout from this internal scandal. The desire to support prisoners of conscience from its membership far outweighed the problems created by such internal controversies. Once the initial shock of Benenson's remarks had blown over, it was easy for the organisation to return to its previous work based on and inspired by the strong ethos the organisation had created and instilled amongst its supporters. Secondly, by the mid-1960s Amnesty had become more than just Benenson's pet project. It is perhaps a testament to how quickly the organisation developed that just five years after its foundation it no longer needed its founder. The sheer strength of the organisations *raison d'etre*, developed by Benenson, ironically meant that he was no longer essential for the organisation. The reasoning for Amnesty's survival in the face of this scandal sets it apart from other organisations formed in this period of the Cold War in that the strength of its ethos outweighed the position of its leading members. By the early 1970s, the idea behind

[66] S. MacBride, 'To All Staff', 27 February 1967, IEC doc. 39, IISG. [No Ref].
[67] For a translated copy of this TASS report see 'USSR Campaign Update No.2: Text of TASS Comment on AI's Open Letter', November 1979, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick (hereafter MRC), MSS 34/4/1/USSR/66.
[68] For more on the Congress for Cultural Freedom see F. S. Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, (London, 1999).

Amnesty's work had become more important than the composition of the organisation itself. This is particularly important to note in the context of Amnesty's work on the Soviet Union as it highlights that the organisation was driven by a strong ethos and principle, rather than the whim of a leading figure – something that gave the group much political credence.

Although initially founded in a small barristers office, Amnesty rapidly grew from its humble beginnings into an international organisation which encompassed members from around the world. These London based offices became the heart of Amnesty's work – a central point where day-to-day research and running of the organisation occurred. Alongside this development was the regular meetings of the International Executive Committee (IEC) and the International Council (ICM), which brought together members from the national Amnesty sections to discuss central policy and decisions. As a result, Amnesty developed into quite a complex group with a vast spread of influence and interest at differing levels of the organisation. Despite this complexity, Amnesty is essentially comprised of two main components; its London based central body known as the International Secretariat and the more localised national organisations.

The International Secretariat was the central hub of Amnesty, which controlled the direction and official output of the group throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Based in London, it acted as the information source of the organisation comprising its research departments and management. It was essentially born out of Benenson's barrister offices, which expanded and moved into new premises when needed. Its location in London led to the organisation being described as 'British', when in reality it was an international organisation that had been based in Britain since its foundation. Amnesty's base in the West is something that some human rights theorists were undoubtedly critical of, arguing that organisations such as Amnesty sought to impose Western human rights traditions on the rest of the world in a form of cultural imperialism.[69] The location of the International Secretariat in London was supported by a report to the IEC in November 1975. This report noted that as an outstanding English-speaking world metropolis, London was an obvious place to locate an organisation that had an English working

[69] For example of this see M. Mutua, *Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique* (Philadelphia, 2002).

language, in the same manner that Paris would be an obvious choice for an organisation with a French working language.[70] This report also noted the benefit of Amnesty being located in 'a classical center[sic] of liberal traditions', stating that drawing on the democratic traditions of the United Kingdom was of much use for the organisation.[71] Whilst being based in the UK limited the nationalities that worked in the International Secretariat, it meant that the organisation developed a European flavour that has remained with Amnesty to the present.

Running in tandem with the International Secretariat were national groups, which carried out the campaigning efforts of the organisation. These national groups were comprised of local Amnesty groups, where the bulk of Amnesty's membership reside. These local groups were effectively tasked with responding to the information provided by the International Secretariat, adopting prisoners of conscience and campaigning on their behalf.[72] Jonathon Power refers to these local organisations in *Like Water on Stone* as the 'central cog in the machinery Amnesty used in its struggle on behalf of political prisoners.'[73] This is particularly true in two senses. The local groups contained the vast grassroot membership of the organisation that carried out the bulk of its activism and also from which the organisation's finances were raised from. Without either of these components, Amnesty would simply not have functioned in this period.

Amnesty has become recognisable for the efforts of its local organisations. In particular, the letter writing campaigns that these groups conducted have become one of the main features of Amnesty's work that it is most publicly identified with. Local Amnesty groups were encouraged to write letters to both the prisoner in question, offering their support, and to the authorities that had imprisoned them.[74] These groups were nicknamed the 'Three's Network' by Benenson, due to the three prisoners of conscience allocated to each group – one each from the West, the Soviet bloc, and the developing world. That prisoners of conscience from the Soviet bloc made up a third

[70] 'London – Positive and Negative', November 1975, IEC doc. 97, IISG [ORG 06/IEC 75].
[71] Ibid.
[72] For more on the composition of Amnesty International see the 'Statute of Amnesty International' at http://www.amnesty.org/en/who-we-are/accountability/statute-of-amnesty-international [Accessed 23 March 2011].
[73] Power, *Like Water on Stone* p. 135.
[74] Ibid, p. 120.

of all cases taken on by local groups highlights how wide spread Amnesty efforts were for Soviet dissenters. It also reinforces how surprising it is that writers such as Power have omitted discussion of this area of Amnesty's history in their work.

The technique of sustained pressure on the authorities through letter writing by local activists was remarkably effective in improving the position of prisoners of conscience, and is something that has become synonymous with Amnesty's campaigns. Power cites the example of Julio de Peña Valdez, a prisoner of conscience in the Dominican Republic who was released from imprisonment in January 1976 after Amnesty had launched a letter campaign on his behalf.[75] This letter writing technique was widely used in supporting Soviet prisoners of conscience, and is described by some dissidents in their memoirs of time in prison. The Ukrainian dissident Leonid Plyushch, for example, refers explicitly to the impact of Amnesty letters in his memoir *History's Carnival*.[76] This letter writing technique may have been particularly effective in the case of Soviet prisoners of conscience due the way in which the Soviet state functioned. The highly bureaucratised manner in which the Soviet state operated was often exploited by dissidents, who wrote large amounts of correspondence to bureaucrats to complain about legal abuses.[77] Amnesty's numerous letters would have added much pressure to the work of these bureaucrats, and undoubtedly had an impact on the way in which these dissidents were treated.

Amnesty's composition as a centralised research body with many local groups had many benefits for the organisation. It allowed its work to be governed by a central international body who controlled the direction of the organisation and its public output, whilst allowing national and local bodies to maintain an element of independence, and the fervent activism that went along with this autonomy. This approach maintained the passion for activism from the average grassroots member whilst allowing the leadership to enter into negotiations with national governments and international organisations on a more established basis. As such it is clear that

[75] Ibid, p. 134.
[76] Plyushch, *History's Carnival*, p. xvii and p.324.
[77] See Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle* and A. Shcharansky, *Fear No Evil* (New York, 1988) especially pp. 334-352.

Amnesty was an organisation with two very different personas: the international organisation and the local activist group.

Whilst the role of local groups was key to the way in which Amnesty operated, it is clear that the overarching direction of the organisations campaigns was largely dictated by its central organisation. This chapter will focus on this central organisation, allowing sustained analysis of the long term campaigns for Soviet dissidents, rather than the more personalised campaigns for individuals dissidents conducted by local Amnesty groups. Focusing on the central organisation also centres analysis on Amnesty's publications and reports on the Soviet Union, which were deeply influential on both British society and politics. Amnesty's Research Department was the heartbeat of the groups work of the Soviet Union, and in order to fully understand the organisations approach, one needs to understand the work of this body.

Amnesty's Involvement with the USSR

From its beginnings, the hierarchy of Amnesty were concerned about the position of human rights in the Soviet Union and other communist states. At its second international conference held in September 1962 in Sijsele, Belgium, Sean MacBride, the Chairman of Amnesty's International Executive from 1961 to 1975, gave a lecture entitled 'Persecution in the Marxist-Leninist States'. That this was delivered alongside other lectures that covered broad themes such as 'Persecution of Religion', 'Persecution of Minorities' and 'Racial Persecution', highlights the importance to which the topic of MacBride's lecture was placed.[78]

The need to keep abreast of the latest developments in the position of human rights in the Soviet Union was noted at Amnesty ICMs in the 1960s. At a meeting in 1966, two resolutions were brought to the Council regarding the Soviet Union. The first of these was a direct pledge for Amnesty to make 'vigorous' representations to the Soviet authorities about the imprisoned dissident writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, calling for their release. This resolution also

[78] 'Relief of the Persecuted 1962' conference outline, September 1962 and 'Persecution in the Marxist-Leninist States, Summary of Lecture by Sean MacBride, 28th September 1962', ICM no. 3. IISG, [No Ref].

noted that Amnesty should do more to publicise this case amongst both its own members and the wider public.[79]

The second resolution on the Soviet Union noted the need for the organisation to engage in research into the position of political prisoners in the USSR and other communist states. This resolution stated that this was to ensure that Amnesty was not 'worse informed about it [the Soviet Union] than we are about that of political prisoners in other countries with which we are concerned'.[80] This suggests that there was a concern in the leadership of Amnesty that it lacked knowledge on the Soviet Union in comparison to its own work on other nations, something that it wanted to redress. It is also revealing of how central research and quality of information was to Amnesty's campaigns. Given the centrality of this research to Amnesty's work, this resolution can be seen as a direct call to action to improve the quality of research into the Soviet Union. It also illustrates the concern that the group had for the region, effectively calling for more activism in this area.

In hindsight, these two early resolutions discussed at Amnesty's International Council Meetings neatly illustrate the approach that Amnesty took to the Soviet Union for the duration of the Cold War, and the problems that it had doing this. Repeated petitions to the Soviet authorities for specific persecuted dissidents, timed with widespread publicity campaigns in the West on their behalf, alongside the constant struggle to maintain and develop the highest levels of research into violations in the Soviet Union.

Amnesty's public output on the Soviet Union in this period was remarkably forthright on human rights abuses. Whilst the distribution of information on prisoners of conscience was at the centre of its activism, this was closely followed by a clear emphasis on Amnesty's position and their demands. Its news releases on the Soviet Union were replete with the organisation's position on reports of abuses, which regularly called for immediate action from the authorities. Amnesty's press release on the deportation of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in February 1974 is a good

[79] 'Committee II, Resolution 3, September 1966, ICM no. 7. IISG [No Ref].
[80] Ibid.

example of its bold approach towards the Soviet authorities. This press release deplored the actions of the Soviet authorities, calling for them to act in order to restore the rule of law and the inviolable rights of its own citizens.[81] Considering that Amnesty had attempted to build relations with the Soviet authorities at the highest levels in this period, this request, which challenged the way in which the Soviet government operated, was not going to win the organisation friends in Moscow. Another example of this forthright approach can be seen in a press release dated 21 March 1976 in which Amnesty demanded that the details of the trial of Andrei Tverdokhlebov, a prominent dissident with links to Amnesty, be released to the public and that it be allowed to send a lawyer to observe the trial itself.[82] This approach can also be seen in a news release dated 20 September 1985, which called for an immediate Soviet official report to be compiled on the deaths of prisoners held at a special labour camp for political prisoners.[83]

The consistent demanding approach from Amnesty towards the Soviet government is in stark contrast to the fluctuating output from Western governments. In this period the US administration's position towards the Soviet Union changed from one of détente under Richard Nixon, insistence on human rights under Jimmy Carter, and finally to a renewal of the Cold War against an 'evil empire' under Ronald Reagan. British governments also fluctuated in their response to Soviet human rights abuse in this period, although perhaps not as dramatically as their US counterparts. In contrast, Amnesty's position towards the Soviet abuses in this period remained unchanged. Other organisations, such as the British trade union movement, lacked this forthright approach. The Trades Union Congress (TUC) had a particularly 'soft' approach when it petitioned the Soviet authorities about the plight of dissidents, preferring to engage in off-the-record comments and discussions rather than public press releases.[84] Trade Unionists that directly

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[81] 'Amnesty Says USSR has violated its own undertakings in deporting Solzhenitsyn and continuing its policy of detaining dissidents', Amnesty Press releases no. 948, 20 February 1974, IISG.[No Ref]

[82] 'Amnesty International asks Soviets to reveal details of trial of one of its Moscow members', 21 March 1976, *IDC Amnesty International Microfiche Collection, 1962-2008 Marylebone Information Service, Marylebone Library, London.* (from here on IDC) fiche no. C2 [No Ref].

[83] 'Amnesty International calls for full report on Soviet Prisoners Deaths', 20 September 1985, IDC, fiche no. C24 [EUR46/28/85].

[84] See M. Hurst, 'Soviet Dissidents and the West: The British Trade Union Movement's Support for Soviet Refuseniks, 1956 – 1985, Unpublished Masters Thesis, September 2009.

criticised the Soviet record on human rights, such as the General Secretary of the Electrical, Electricians, Telecommunications and Plumbers Union (EETPU) Frank Chapple became vocal exceptions to an otherwise quiet group.[85] That Amnesty's forthright approach to Soviet human rights violation remained consistent throughout the later twentieth century is perhaps most telling of its reliance on the ethos and conviction of the organisation above other political influence. The stable position that Amnesty occupied in shifting international ideological conflict undoubtedly strengthened the organisation's reputation. This was especially important in dealing with reports of abuse from the Soviet Union, where a firm conviction based on evidence was likely to hold more weight with the wider public than the politically charged propaganda of the time.

Alongside the petitions to the Soviet authorities, Amnesty's research department flourished, creating a multitude of reports on the Soviet abuse of human rights. There are several reasons as to why Amnesty produced such a vast amount of material on the Soviet Union. Firstly, Amnesty's hybrid composition as both an international and local organisation means that a flow of information from the centre to its grassroot components was essential for the group to effectively function. Today, Amnesty utilises the internet to fulfil this service, publishing an array of materials regarding prisoners of conscience on the website of the International Secretariat. Indeed, given the amount of press releases and reports of human rights abuse, and the frequency with which it is updated, the website of the International Secretariat closely resembles that of a news organisation.[86] Prior to the widespread use of the internet, Amnesty relied on print material to maintain this connection between the centre and the periphery of the organisation. This can be seen not only in the frequent supply of press releases and reports on abuses on a regular basis, but also in the type of reports that were published. Material published by Amnesty in this period can rarely be seen as stand alone pieces. Reports regularly refer to previous information released, and in some cases are incoherent without referencing a previous report. For example, 'Continuing Psychiatric Abuses in the Soviet Union', an Amnesty report released on 22 January 1979 makes explicit references to three previous reports in a section on the general background of the

[85] For more on Frank Chapple's activism, see F. Chapple, *Sparks Fly!: A Trade Union Life* (London, 1984).
[86] See http://www.amnesty.org/ [accessed 25 March 2011]

abuses.[87] This report is clearly a list of developments since previous reports had been published, and as a result cannot be read in isolation. This form of report is common of Amnesty's publications on the Soviet Union in this period, with reports adding new information to previously published material. This illustrates not only the cumulative effect of Amnesty's research reports, but also the desire of the organisation to disseminate the most up-to-date information it had on human rights violation as frequently as possible.

The flow of information from the Soviet Union in this period should also be taken into account when assessing Amnesty's output on the matter. Despite the attempts of the Soviet authorities, underground material on human rights abuses flowed from behind the Iron Curtain to the West with much ease. *Samizdat* reports from dissidents were regularly smuggled out by human rights activists and other concerned individuals. Professor Peter Reddaway, an academic keenly involved in reporting on the dissident movement managed to attain an array of material from the Soviet Union in this period through journalists, tourists and students who came to London after having left the Soviet Union.[88] This irregular and rapidly changing courier service carried the vast majority of empirical evidence on Soviet dissenters from the USSR to the UK. Materials that emanated from the Soviet Union in the form of *samizdat* offered a plethora of examples of human rights abuse. Much of this material made its way to human rights organisations such as Amnesty, who used this information in their news bulletins and sometimes reprinted verbatim extracts of *samizdat* material.[89] Of these reports translated and published by

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[87] Amnesty International, 'Continuing Psychiatric Abuses in the Soviet Union', 22 January 1979, MRC, MSS. 34/4/1/USSR/56 [No Ref].

[88] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010. Peter Reddaway was a very important figure who was involved in a variety of human rights organisations concerned at the plight of Soviet dissidents. He was also an academic in the School of Government at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and wrote extensively on the dissident movement in the Soviet Union. Reddaway's publications include P. Reddaway, *Uncensored Russia: The Human Rights Movement in the Soviet Union* (London, 1972); S. Bloch and P. Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospital's* (London, 1977); A.H. Brown, P. Reddaway, and T.H. Rigby (ed.) *Authority, Power and Policy in the USSR* (London, 1980); and S. Bloch and P. Reddaway, *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse: The Shadow Over World Psychiatry* (London, 1984).

[89] See 'The Death Penalty in the USSR: A Soviet Citizen's Proposal for Abolition', December 1979, IDC, fiche no. E56 [EUR46/59/79]; 'An account of the imprisonment of an Armenian Helsinki Monitor in an ordinary regime corrective labour colony for women: text of an appeal' August 1981, MRC, MSS.34/4/1/USSR/84 [No Ref]; and 'Translation of an open letter from a former victim of Soviet psychiatric abuse', September 1984, MRC, MSS.34/4/1/USSR/95 [No Ref].

Amnesty, the most prominent was the underground journal of the dissident movement, the *Chronicle of Current Events*, which will discussed extensively later in this chapter.

Alongside the reproduction of underground material, Amnesty ran a regular campaign for so-called 'Prisoners of the Month' throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This campaign identified a selection of prisoners of conscience from around the world, and requested that Amnesty members send correspondence to governments, politicians and other influential individuals on their behalf. This can be seen as an attempt to both target individual prisoners that hoped to attain a significant boost in support for their plight and to place pressure on the regimes that had them imprisoned. Amnesty was clear to highlight the way in which it wanted those who were concerned with these individuals to respond. In a header to its Prisoners of the Month campaign it clearly stated that:

> In the interest of prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In *no* circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.[90]

This tactic of requesting letters to not be sent to the prisoner in question is very different to Amnesty's usual request. Indeed, part of the public image of the organisation is in the letter writing to prisoners that its local groups conducted. This request reveals two of Amnesty's concerns with this prompt campaign on behalf of a prisoner. Firstly, they appear to be keen to avoid their efforts to put the prisoner in question in a more threatened position, as this correspondence could be used to accuse prisoners of being foreign spies. Dissidents were routinely accused of conducting espionage due to their links with Westerners. Anatoly Shcharansky, for example, was accused of being an American spy, despite the fact that Jimmy Carter, the US President, broke protocol by discussing US intelligence and denied that this was the case.[91] Secondly, it highlights Amnesty's insistence on being a politically neutral organisation, something it clearly wished to uphold in the context of the Cold War. As this campaign

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[90] For an example of this, see Anatoly Marchenko (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month) *Amnesty International Newsletter*, November 1982, Vol. 12, No. 11, IDC, fiche no. 112 [No Ref].
[91] Shcharansky, *Fear No Evil*, p. 287.

encouraged people to act on Amnesty's behalf, it was essential for them to insist on courtesy to prevent any backlash against either the organisation itself or the prisoner.

Somewhat unsurprisingly, a host of Soviet dissidents found themselves among these campaigns. Among those highlighted were Andrei Sakharov, Anatoly Marchenko and Sergei Kovalyov, three prominent figures in the dissident movement.[92] What is notable about the individuals from the Soviet Union that Amnesty decided to focus their attention on in this campaign is the frequency little known prisoners were chosen. With the exception of a few high profile individuals, Amnesty appears to have focused its attention on those who were not being recognised in the international press. This is even more striking in hindsight, when it is noted that Amnesty campaigned for individuals such as Henrikas Jashkunas, Yuri Shukhevych and Mart Niklus who are not considered as major figures of Soviet dissent.[93]

This publicising of cases involving those less well known prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union appears to run through Amnesty's press releases from the 1970s and 1980s. Consultation of the IDC microfiche collection of Amnesty's output and the IISG collection of Amnesty news releases shows that the organisation's output on the Soviet Union was not dominated by names of well known dissenters, something that could be suggested of other human rights organisations and campaigns for individual dissidents active in this period. This can be most clearly seen in the so-called Urgent Action reports released by Amnesty on Soviet prisoners of conscience. Urgent Actions were the most pressing releases from Amnesty on prisoners of conscience, used when a prisoner's life was in grave danger and immediate action on their behalf was required. Whilst these Urgent Action reports do include information on the more prominent dissidents, they include calls for action for 'forgotten prisoners'. These included less

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[92] Sergei Adamovich Kovalyov (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month), *Amnesty International Newsletter*, December 1977, Vol. 7, No. 12, IDC, fiche no. D38 [No Ref]; Anatoly Marchenko (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month) *Amnesty International Newsletter*, November 1982, Vol. 12, No. 11, IDC, fiche no. 112 [No Ref]; and Andrei Sakharov (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month), *Amnesty International Newsletter*, September 1985, Vol. 15, No. 9, IDC, fiche no. D135 [No Ref].

[93] For Amnesty campaigns on behalf of these individuals see Henrikas Jashkunas (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month), *Amnesty International Newsletter*, July 1982, Vol. 12, No. 7, IDC, fiche no. D110 [No Ref]; Yuri Shukhevych (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month), *Amnesty International Newsletter*, February 1982, Vol. 12, No. 2, IDC, fiche no. D105 [No Ref]; and Mart Niklus (Campaign for Prisoners of the Month), *Amnesty International Newsletter*, January 1983, Vol. 14, No. 1, IDC, fiche no. D115 [No Ref].

prominent dissidents such as Mikhail Leviev, Yakov Suslensky, and Ivan Svitlychny amongst many others.[94] The Urgent Action reports on behalf of these individuals occurred alongside similar reports for some of the well known dissenters such as Sakharov and Alexander Podrabinek.[95] This suggests that Amnesty were keen to report all cases of human rights violation in the Soviet Union, and that they did not focus solely on the well known dissidents such as Sakharov, Shcharansky and Solzhenitsyn. From Amnesty's publications, it does not appear that any such focus on particular dissidents took place. This suggests that Amnesty researchers considered all the information that they received from the Soviet Union, and published reports on all worthy cases without drawing particular attention to certain individuals. The Urgent Action reports are of particular use in showing this approach, as they highlight the most urgent information that Amnesty disseminated on Soviet prisoners of conscience. That these reports are not dominated by the more well known dissidents, such as Sakharov and Shcharansky, is indicative of how Amnesty's output was not driven by geopolitical concerns in the context of the Cold War, but by a concern for the human lives of individuals in the Soviet Union. That Amnesty did not appear to consolidate their efforts around certain individuals, and reported on dissenters who have subsequently faded from British discourse suggests that their efforts were impartial focusing on a broad spectrum of victims rather than well known dissenters.

In an article entitled 'The "Forgotten Prisoners", ...16 years later', Peter Benenson highlighted Amnesty's desire not to focus on the 'celebrity' dissident. He recalled the approach by a television producer who wanted to create a programme about Amnesty, and hoped to film a local adoption group working for 'some prisoner as near the like to Vladimir Bukovsky'.[96] Benenson's response to this approach aptly shows his position:

To ring a bell with her audience she was determined to have a Soviet dissident, preferably young and good looking. If that programme was to give a true reflection of the work of "Amnesty

[94] See 'Urgent Action Campaign – Death Penalty', 7 February 1975, UA doc. 929, IISG [No Ref] ; 'Urgent Action: Prisoner in Bad Health Condition', 5 August 1976, UA doc. 930, IISG, [UA 71/76]; and 'USSR: Ivan Svitlychny', 8 January 1982, UA doc. 937, IISG [EUR 46/02/82].
[95] 'USSR: Andrei Sakharov', 15 June 1983, UA doc. 938, IISG, [EUR 46/19/83]; and 'USSR: Alexander Podrabinek', 25 November 1982, UA doc. 937, IISG, [EUR 46/34/82].
[96] P. Benenson, 'The "Forgotten Prisoners"...16 years later', date unknown although likely to be from mid-1977, Amnesty Press doc. 952, IISG [No Ref].

International", it should have shown a group working for the release of some ugly old man in a country most people have never heard of.[97]

Benenson's illustration of Amnesty members working for the 'ugly old man' rather than the clean cut young dissident neatly illustrates the universal approach of Amnesty with regards not only to Soviet dissenters, but to all prisoners of conscience that it worked for. In this instance, Benenson is clear to highlight that the organisation worked for individuals due to a moral position on protecting freedom of speech and other human rights, rather than in defence of 'poster boys' of the dissident movement. The strength of this ethos dominated Amnesty's output on the Soviet Union, and undoubtedly played a part in the fervent campaigning of its members.

The insistence of this producer to focus on a Soviet dissenter illustrates how the problem of Soviet human rights violation had become popular in the mainstream, something that would 'ring a bell' with her audience. This is quite ironic, due in part to the efforts of human rights groups which publicised the cases of individuals such as Bukovsky who can be seen as the archetypal 'celebrity' Soviet dissident.[98] Bukovsky's reputation was established in British public discourse by human rights organisations such as Amnesty, who campaigned extensively for his release and included him in their postcards for prisoners campaign.[99]Amnesty's reputation, and the regard in which its publications were held with journalists and the wider public arguably popularised these dissidents, which made them celebrities of sorts. This created the problem of over-exposure for prisoners of conscience from some countries. This was arguably a welcome problem, as increased publicity for an individual dissident such as Bukovsky may have publicised Amnesty's work to a wider audience. In doing so, other prisoners of conscience that it also worked for also gained this much welcomed publicity.

By the early-1970s, Amnesty had a clearly defined international profile, something that sets it apart from the other human rights organisations assessed by this thesis. This international

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[97] Benenson, 'The "Forgotten Prisoners"...16 years later'.

[98] 'Celebrity' in this instance refers to being well known in the public domain, rather than the negative *prima donna* association that contemporary celebrity contains.

[99] For example see 'Amnesty welcomes release of Vladimir Bukovsky and Luis Corvalan', 21 December 1976, IDC fiche no. C5, IISG [NR 36/76]; and 'Europe – Campaigns report', November 1976, IEC doc. 111, IISG [EUR 01/IEC76].

presence, which included many national bodies operating as affiliated but distinct entities from the International Secretariat in London, was most strongly present in the West. Amnesty International USA and Amnesty International UK were perhaps the two most prominent of these national bodies, and continue to maintain a strong presence today.

Unlike other human rights organisations in this period, Amnesty is perhaps most notable because it had its own branch within the Soviet Union. The first signs of an Amnesty group forming in Russia occurred in September 1973 when four Soviet dissidents, who called themselves Group 73 contacted Amnesty's International Secretariat in London.[100] Their message to the International Secretariat was released in a statement to the press, which coincided with the sixth ICM that was in session in Vienna at the time. Their astonishment at Amnesty's ideological position in contrast to their own experiences is clear to see from this message:

> As for words like 'conscience', 'dignity', 'convictions' – we have been accustomed to apply them exclusively to the exertions and strivings of individual human beings...[We] could not at first grasp the fact that it is possible to speak to total strangers about these things, even though they live in totally different conditions and other cultures. It is this above all that we prize in your example and your activity, insofar as we are in a position to judge it. Please accept our best wishes.[101]

Group 73 were clearly deeply enamoured with Amnesty and its ethos of supporting the forgotten prisoner of conscience. The chance to interact with others who held similar beliefs was a strong appeal for the group, who in October 1973 became the Moscow branch of Amnesty. This was part of a wider plan by a group of dissidents to create non-state organisations to engage in peaceful human rights activism.[102] Yury Orlov, one of the early members of the group, noted that there were 25 to 30 original members of this group, comprised mainly of writers and scientists from the major cities in the West of the Soviet Union.[103] They were led by Andrei Tverdokhlebov and Valentin Turchin, who dealt with the formalities of founding the group and its relationship with Amnesty in London. The group were officially accepted by Amnesty's International

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[100] The four members of Group 73 were Vladimir Albrecht, Vladimir Archangelsky, Ilya Korneyev and Andrei Tverdokhlebov, see Soviet Human Rights Committee Sends Message to Amnesty International, September 1973, Amnesty ICM no. 13, IISG. [No Ref].

[101] 'Soviet Human Rights Committee Sends Message to Amnesty International, September 1973, Amnesty ICM no. 13, IISG. [No Ref].

[102] Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts*, p. 168.

[103] Ibid, p. 168.

Secretariat as a national section in September 1974, and were assigned prisoners of conscience in Spain, Sri Lanka, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.[104]

Whilst the Moscow group were active in supporting prisoners of conscience around the world they did not (in Amnesty's name at least) engage in supporting Soviet dissidents.[105] Amnesty regulations prevented members from taking up prisoners of conscience from their own country, a policy known as the Work On Own Country (WOOC) rule, which caused much controversy among Amnesty members in the 1990s.[106] This policy was essential in the course of the Cold War, and was a way in which Amnesty members attempted to separate their work in supporting prisoners of conscience from engagement in the wider ideological conflict of the time. In short, it was an attempt to show impartiality in a partial world.

Yury Orlov's account of the foundation of the Moscow group in his memoirs *Dangerous Thoughts* gives a sense of the danger that members of this group faced due the position of Amnesty in the Soviet Union. Orlov noted that:

> It would have been natural for the Soviet authorities to arrest us immediately. After all, they hated peaceful pluralism even more than they hated any hostile ideology, and had long since proclaimed to everyone in the USSR that Amnesty International was an agency of the American CIA[107]

The foundation of a group that was seen to be subversive in this period clearly brought many risks for the individuals involved, many of whom had been active dissidents in other organisations such as Sakharov's Moscow Committee for Human Rights.[108] Indeed, Orlov notes that the only reasons their immediate arrest did not happen was due to a forthcoming visit of Sean MacBride to a Congress of Peace-Loving Forces to be held in Moscow shortly after the groups formation. MacBride was deeply respected by the Soviet authorities for his activism

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[104] D. Kowalewski, 'The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' in J. Donnelly and R. Howard, *International Handbook of Human Rights* (Connecticut, 1987) p. 416; and 'Amnesty International asks Soviet Authorities to investigate harassment complaint from Moscow group member', 18 October 1976, IDC fiche no. C4 [No Ref].

[105] 'Amnesty International Asks Soviet Authorities to Investigate Harassment Complaint from Moscow Group Member', *Amnesty International News Release*, 18 October 1976, IDC, fiche no. C4 [No Ref].

[106] Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame*, pp. 97-101. Hopgood notes that Amnesty's WOOC rule was heavily criticized by African and Asian human rights activists who felt that it restricted local human rights activism.

[107] Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts* p. 168.

[108] Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts* p. 168. Tverdokhlebov was a member and cofounder of this group.

against British rule in Ireland, and was an individual the Soviets did not want to alienate.[109] The Soviet authorities were clearly attempting to utilise their relationship with Amnesty, and figures such as MacBride, for their own political aims.

The Moscow branch kept infrequent contact with the International Secretariat in the mid 1970s, due to harassment by the Soviet authorities. In the minutes of the ninth International Council Meeting held in September 1976, there was a message from Andrei Amalrik, which noted the activity of the Moscow group in supporting prisoners of conscience. Amalrik's message describes how important their concern was for prisoners of conscience 'since many of our fellow citizens including members of our own group have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and exile for expressing their opinions'.[110] This message can be read as both an update on the group's efforts for prisoners of conscience, and also a call for assistance.

Delegates from the Moscow group were invited to attend Amnesty's eleventh ICM, held in Cambridge in September 1978. Andrei Tverdokhlebov and George Vladimov are both listed as delegates from USSR who, it had been noted in the report of the meeting, had been unable to attend the meeting due to a failure to receive permission to travel abroad from the Soviet authorities.[111] This was clearly an attempt to limit the links that the Moscow group had with Amnesty's International Secretariat, and a direct punishment of those involved with Amnesty in the Soviet Union. This was part of a wider array of attacks on Amnesty by the Soviet authorities, which occurred on both a personal level against its members and on an institutional level against the organisation itself.

In the early 1970s, attacks on Amnesty by the Soviet authorities were relatively trivial. Articles in the Soviet press described Amnesty of spreading 'falsified materials in capitalist countries which are expected to convince the public that that believers are persecuted in the

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[109] Ibid.

[110] Amnesty International, 'Report and Decisions of the 9th International Council Meeting', p. 101, ICM doc. 28, IISG [No Ref].

[111] List of participants to 11th International Council Meeting of Amnesty International' September 1978, ICM doc. 29, IISG [ORG53/01/79].

USSR ... In addition, the philanthropists resort to crude slander.'[112] These attacks came in a period when Amnesty attempted to engage with the Soviet government, meeting with a group of high profile Soviet Lawyers at a meeting of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers in April 1975, something which is likely to have contributed to this relatively tame approach.[113] This was arguably in an attempt to enter into a dialogue with the Soviet authorities regarding prisoners of conscience, hoping to attain an improvement in their treatment.[114] This is a relationship that the Soviet authorities may also have wanted to develop, potentially so that they could have some influence on Amnesty's leadership and its subsequent output on Soviet prisoners of conscience. TASS did not openly call Amnesty 'anti-Soviet' in this period, despite Stephanie Grant, Amnesty's Head of Research, noting that it was plain they regarded them as such.[115] This ambivalent position shifted throughout the 1970s, with Soviet attacks on Amnesty becoming more severe later in the decade. Unlike other human rights organisation in the West that came under attack by the Soviet authorities, the presence of an Amnesty group in Moscow meant that these attacks took on a more personal level with explicit pressure placed on Amnesty members. In some cases this included lengthy spells in hard labour camps and flagrant abuse of the Soviet legal system as in the cases of Sergei Kovalyov and Vladimir Turchin.

Sergei Kovalyov, a prominent member of the Moscow Amnesty group and later human rights advisor to the Russian President Boris Yeltsin after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was sentenced to seven years hard labour in December 1975 for 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda', ostensibly for his involvement with Amnesty.[116] Andrei Tverdokhlebov, another important member of the Moscow group, was arrested in April 1975, accused of anti-Soviet slander. He was held without trial for over a year, longer than the nine month period allowed in

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[112] 'Wrong Address, Gentlemen', *Pravda Ukrainy*, 1 November 1970, quoted in *Amnesty International In Quotes* (London, 1973) p.15.
[113] 'Report on a meeting with Soviet Lawyers at the Tenth Congress of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), 6 April 1975, Algiers', IEC doc. 91, IISG [No Ref].
[114] S. Grant, 'Amnesty International's Relations with Governments, Case Study: The Soviet Union', July 1975, IEC doc. 92, IISG [No Ref].
[115] S. Grant, 'Amnesty International's Relations with Governments, Case Study: The Soviet Union', July 1975, IEC doc. 92, IISG [No Ref].
[116] For more on the activism of Kovalyov see Gilligan, *Defending Human Rights in Russia*.

Soviet law, suggesting that there was political intervention in his case, something that led Amnesty to report that his trial would be 'one of the few overtly political trials in Moscow in recent years'.[117] Ten prominent Soviet Jews protested against his arrest, an unusual instance in itself due the relative isolation of Soviet Jewry from human rights activism. This protest was the subject of a letter written to *The New York Review of Books* by Peter Reddaway, who noted that such an appeal by Soviet Jewry had previously been reserved to 'world-famous' figures such as Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn, illustrating the compassion felt for Tverdokhlebov by these individuals. They noted in their appeal that due to Tverdokhlebov's close association with Amnesty, an organisation they noted that enjoyed international respect, 'his arrest can be interpreted only as a slap in the face to world public opinion'.[118]

Vladimir Turchin, the chairman of Amnesty's Moscow group, and Vladimir Albrecht, the secretary, were invited to the attend Amnesty's 1976 ICM but were refused permission to leave by the Soviet authorities. After this request, Turchin and Albrecht were subjected to harassment from KGB agents, who followed both individuals, warning them that they would be thrown onto the tracks of the Metro, and that if ordered to, they would kill them.[119] These cases were clearly attempts by the KGB and other parts of the Soviet authorities to intimidate these individuals, and to coerce them to cease their activities.

The attacks on members of the Moscow Amnesty group came to a head in January 1977 when Albrecht was questioned by the KGB regarding an explosion on the Moscow Metro. By making Albrecht a suspect in this case, the Soviet authorities clearly attempted to label him a terrorist. Several dissidents had come out in the wake of the Metro explosion with a statement that they were in no way associated with this event, and that they rejected the use of violence.[120] This attack was part of a larger KGB clampdown on dissidents that Sakharov described as 'a

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[117] 'Amnesty International asks Soviet to reveal details of trial of one of its Moscow members', 21 March 1976, IDC fiche no. C2 [No Ref].

[118] P. Reddaway, 'An Appeal from Moscow', *The New York Review of Books*, 12 June 1975, available at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1975/jun/12/an-appeal-from-moscow/ [accessed 10 November 2011].

[119] 'Amnesty International asks Soviet Authorities to investigate harassment complaint from Moscow group member', 18 October 1976, IDC fiche no. C4 [No Ref].

[120] For more on this event see A. Sakharov, *Alarm and Hope* (London, 1979) pp. 57-80.

slander aimed at discrediting dissidents in the eyes of trusting and uninformed people in the USSR and the West.[121] Attempts to designate those involved with the Moscow Amnesty group as terrorists was a clear attempt by the Soviet authorities to discredit Amnesty's reputation in the Soviet Union. Given Amnesty's clear stance on not supporting those who used, or advocate the use of violence, Amnesty came out in full support of Albrecht. A news release dated 20 January 1977 outlined Amnesty's concern at the reports that Albrecht was being linked to the Metro explosion, and noted that as a member of its Moscow group, he subscribed to the organisation's statute, which prohibited members from supporting prisoners of conscience with links to violence.[122]Whilst this was perhaps not the strongest defence of one of the organisations leading figures in the Soviet Union, it does fall in line with Amnesty's empirical nature, which relied on the reputation of the organisation to be enough to persuade people of Albrecht's innocence.

Attacks on Amnesty extended beyond the Moscow group, often in attempts to disrupt the activities of the organisation. This was most obvious in seemingly trivial matters such as the granting of visas to countries in the Soviet bloc, which were either refused or granted at such a late date that made travel impossible. Martin Ennals, Amnesty's Secretary General, was refused a Soviet visa to attend a meeting of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) conference in Moscow in October 1975. This was seen as a politically motivated refusal which coincided with a low point in relations between Amnesty and the Soviet authorities.[123] It was arguably an attempt to affect the relationship between Amnesty and the United Nations, which had become increasingly close due to Amnesty's Campaign for the Abolition of Torture. Amnesty had reported on several incidents of torture in the Soviet Union in relationship to this campaign, particularly the political abuse of psychiatry. A June 1972 report on torture noted the names of several leading Soviet psychiatrists, including Daniil Lunts, Alexander Lifshits and Andrei Snezhnevsky, and directly labelled them as 'known torturers'.[124] Given the reputation of these

[121] Sakharov, *Alarm and Hope* p. 61.
[122] 'Amnesty International concerned that Moscow group member is questioned in connection with Moscow Metro explosion', 20 January 1977, IDC fiche no. C6 [EUR 02/04/75].
[123] 'Report on Europe', November 1975, IEC doc. 97, IISG [No Ref].
[124] 'List of Known Torturers', June 1972, IEC doc. 58, IISG [No Ref].

individuals in the Soviet hierarchy, this claim would have undoubtedly made the relationship between Amnesty and the Soviet authorities more strained. Visa restrictions were a common tactic used by the Soviet authorities to deal with human rights activists and specialists in the West who had become an irritant. Many of the activists discussed in the course of this thesis experienced difficulties in travelling within the Soviet bloc, in extreme cases being refused entry and blacklisted for many years, something that could be immensely challenging for an area specialist.

The attacks on Amnesty from the Soviet authorities continued into the 1980s. *The Times* reported a *Sovetskaya Rossiya* report in September 1982 that accused Amnesty of being a 'subversive centre dedicated to battling against communism', and that three senior members worked for the CIA.[125] Whilst this can now be considered as a politically motivated accusation designed to slur Amnesty's work in the Soviet media, this was something that played upon the difficulties experienced by Amnesty leadership in 1966-67.

Of all the Soviet propaganda attacks on Amnesty in this period, Samuil Zivs' *The Anatomy of Lies* is perhaps the most full-blooded. Zivs' work is a transparent piece of Soviet propaganda, published in 1984 and written with the clear intention of discrediting Amnesty's work as being nothing more than ideologically driven attacks on the Soviet Union. This is a particularly important piece to consider when assessing the impact that Amnesty had on the wider British public's perception of Soviet dissent as it is one of the major Soviet attempts to attack the groups reputation. Amnesty's ability to persuade the public was effective largely because of its strong reputation for reliability, something that Zivs attempted to dislodge.

Zivs accused Amnesty of having instigated a 'campaign intended to picture the USSR as a sort of regular human rights violations...in keeping with the strategy of stirring up tensions in international relations'.[126] The Soviet criticism of Western organisations and governments 'stirring up international tensions' after the period of détente was a common way in which criticism of its

[125] 'Russia accuses Amnesty of link with CIA', *The Times*, 6 September 1982, p. 4.
[126] Zivs, *The Anatomy of Lies*, p. 15.

domestic agenda was dismissed. Accusing Amnesty of essentially taking sides in the Cold War was a misguided slur from Zivs, given Amnesty's work on human rights violation in Western countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom.[127]

Zivs charged that Amnesty had falsified the information that it published about Soviet human rights abuses, and accused the organisation of being 'born of lies'.[128] This is an interesting turn of phrase used by Zivs, and is indicative of the approach that this work took. Throughout *The Anatomy of Lies*, Zivs attacked the very foundations of Amnesty – the ethos of the organisation which had seen it survive previous controversies and had driven its membership throughout its existence. By suggesting in the strongest terms that this ethos was born out of lies, Zivs attempted to dismantle Amnesty's foundations. This was unlikely to ever be a successful approach for two main reasons Firstly, in the context of the Cold War, this work would have been seen by the majority in the West as an obvious attempt by Soviet propagandists to attack Amnesty. This was part of the wider cultural war that took place in this period and was an attack that would have undoubtedly fallen on deaf ears. Secondly, Amnesty's ethos, described by Hopgood as being a secular religion remained intact from previous attacks which were much more threatening to the organisation such as Benenson's forced departure from the organisation in 1967. Such was the reverence to Amnesty's ethos from its membership and supporters that any criticism of its position would have been easily deflected. By the 1970s, Amnesty had become firmly entrenched in British culture and society, something that acted as a defence mechanism against partial attacks on its position such as *The Anatomy of Lies*. It was this reputation which meant that the majority of the British public and media sided with Amnesty's assessment of human rights in the Soviet Union over its critics – indicative of its strong influence over British discourse.

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[127] For examples of this see: Amnesty International, *Proposal for a commission of inquiry into the effect of domestic intelligence activities on criminal trials in the United States of America* [AMR 51/05/81] (London, 1981); Amnesty International, *The Death Penalty. Amnesty International Report* [ACT 50/003/1979] (London, 1979); and Amnesty International, *Report of an enquiry into allegations of ill-treatment in Northern Ireland* [EUR 45/001/1976] (London, 1975).

[128] Zivs, *The Anatomy of Lies*, p. 6.

The tone throughout *The Anatomy of Lies* is one of accusation and spite. There are lengthy sections which refer directly to individual dissidents, including Bukovsky, Sakharov and Plyushch which are bitter in style. An example of this can be seen in reference to a list of dissidents whom Zivs accuses Amnesty of recruiting as actors for their guest tour agency. Amongst those listed is Andrei Amalrik, who died in a car accident in November 1980. The manner in which his death is described by Zivs is curt and degrading, stating that Victor Fainberg and Vladimir Borisov, two dissidents who were also involved in the car crash that killed Amalrik, 'got away with just a fright' and that 'these two would be sent on more [Amnesty] tours'.[129] Zivs work continued in this vain, and accused Amnesty of picking up dissidents to use them for their own ends. He particularly focused on Fainberg, whom he claims was easy for Amnesty to transport, implicating that he was nothing more than a puppet of the organisation.[130] The attack on Fainberg continues on personal lines, noting the author's opinion that he still suffered from psychiatric illness as Zivs claims to have seen him at a Soviet cultural delegation in Copenhagen running about the hall shouting 'you are murderers', and had to be calmed down by his accompanying psychiatrist.[131] In this respect, *The Anatomy of Lies* is a clear propaganda piece designed both to denigrate and attack those affiliated to Amnesty International and critical of the Soviet Union.

Zivs' attack on dissidents working for Amnesty extended to other activists. Peter Reddaway is mentioned on several occasions in this piece as working for, and being an official of Amnesty.[132] Given that Reddaway kept his involvement with organisations such as Amnesty as quiet as possible, with his name not appearing in Amnesty's published versions of the *Chronicle* that he edited, and he was not an official of Amnesty as is suggested[133], one can presume that some of Zivs' pronouncements were based on information fed to him, potentially by the Soviet

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[129] Zivs, *The Anatomy of Lies* p. 33. Amalrik, Borisov, Fainberg and Amalrik's wife Gyuzel were travelling to France to Spain to attend a conference on the Helsinki accords. This was done illegally via car as having been stripped of Soviet citizenship they were stateless, and the Spanish Government had refused them entry to avoid a confrontation with the Soviet Union. See R. Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness: From the Soviet Union of Leonid Brezhnev to the "Soviet Union" of Vladimir Putin* (New York, 2009), p. 76.
[130] Zivs, *The Anatomy of Lies*, p. 33.
[131] Ibid, p. 146.
[132] Ibid, p.34, 155-156
[133] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 September 2011.

authorities. *The Anatomy of Lies*, and other propaganda attacks on Amnesty produced in this period were doubtless due to the organisations reproduction of *samizdat* material

Chronicle of Current Events

The *Chronicle* is historically a very important publication for Amnesty International. For years it was the only major Amnesty International publication on a Communist country. It has been and remains a key element in our real support for Soviet prisoners of conscience, for whom it is difficult to work effectively on an individual prisoner basis. Amnesty International has also relied heavily on out publication of the *Chronicle* to "prove" our balance.

Clayton Yeo[134]

At the forefront of Amnesty's campaign for Soviet dissidents was the translation and distribution of *samizdat* material in the West. The richest piece of *samizdat* material readily available to Western Scholars on the Soviet persecution of dissidents was undoubtedly the journal the *Chronicle of Current Events*. Described by Peter Reddaway as 'one of the most important documents ever to come out of the Soviet Union', the *Chronicle* documented human rights abuses in the Soviet Union in a remarkably objective manner, a trait that it became renowned for.[135] This *samizdat* publication sought to report the facts of abuse as they were, and allowed the reader to formulate their own opinions on the matter, offering a unique insight into the dissenting movements within the Soviet Union.

The *Chronicle* was first published via *samizdat* in the Soviet Union in April 1968 and continued to produce regular copies until its final edition in December 1982.[136] This was a remarkable achievement for the dissidents involved with the *Chronicle* when the obstacles they faced are taken into account. The lack of private printing presses in the Soviet Union meant that the mass publication of material was driven through state controlled publishing houses. This had the inevitable complication of being governed by internal censors, who took strict control over

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[134] 'Amnesty International's publishing of *A Chronicle of Current Events*', July 1975, IEC doc. 94, IISG [No Ref].

[135] Reddaway, *Uncensored Russia*, p. 15.

[136] For a complete run of the *Chronicle of Current Events* see *Мемориал: 'Хроника текущих событий архйв'* (Memorial: Chronicle of Current Events Archive) available at http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/index.htm [Russian] [Accessed 8 March 2011]. For an English translation of the Chronicle, see Reddaway, *Uncensored Russia*, and Amnesty International Publications, *A Chronicle of Current Events: A Journal of the Soviet Civil Rights Movement* – Numbers 17 to 64 (London, 1971 to 1984).

the content of all material produced. As a result, anything remotely anti-Soviet in tone would not have been published, sometimes with severe repercussions for the author in question. This forced dissidents to publish material underground, either via laborious retyping of *samizdat* papers, often on so-called 'onion paper' which although very thin allowed several pages to be reproduced on one typewriter at once, or through the formation of their own illegal printing presses. The term *samizdat* is a play on the acronym of the Soviet state publishing house *Gosizdat*, and literally means 'self-publishing house'.[137] The current use of the term *samizdat* in the English language to refer to all forms of clandestine publication goes some way to highlight both the impact that this form of publication had on the Western perception of Soviet dissenters, and also the amount of material produced. This, alongside terms such as *refusenik*, is an instance where Western interaction with Soviet dissenters literally developed British discourse, undoubtedly with the assistance of concerned human rights activists and scholars.

Samizdat literature has come to dominate how historians understand dissenters in the Soviet Union. It was arguably the main way in which dissidents managed to discuss their political ideas with a wider public, both domestically and internationally, and was used extensively by British human rights groups as a way to collate uncensored information from behind the Iron Curtain. Given the influence that it had on British human rights groups in the 1970s and 1980s, it is essential to consider the importance of *samizdat*, and why it developed in the Soviet Union.

Samizdat was a method of publishing in which authors could distribute their work to a wide audience without being censored by the Soviet authorities. This format of publishing allowed works such as Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* and Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*, which were critical of the Soviet regime, to be disseminated throughout the Soviet Union, both of which are now regarded as literary classics.[138]

Engaging in the production of *samizdat* was a particularly important challenge for religious dissenters, who attempted to circumvent the state dominance of publication in order to

[137] M. Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 1980) pp. 128 – 130.
[138] M. Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita* (London, 2008), B. Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago* (London, 1958).

reproduce religious materials such as the bible and other liturgical books. Unsurprisingly, the Soviet authorities significantly restricted the production of religious materials as part of state-driven atheism which forced covert religious organisations to build underground printing presses.[139]

The punishments for those found to have been involved with these printing presses were severe, with the KGB actively seeking to close them. In an article for *The Times*, the journalist Leopold Labedz discussed the background to the *Chronicle* in depth, and noted the risks that involvement with its publication entailed. This included a 'loss of livelihood, exile or imprisonment', or, as he chillingly put it 'such mild routine measures as forcible confinement in mental institutions.[140] This is something that the second chapter of this thesis on the response to psychiatric abuse illustrates was a common way in which the Soviet authorities dealt with dissenters, something that was recognised and actively campaigned against in the West. The dangers in producing and disseminating this material were very real, and being found with *samizdat* material was often enough to send a dissident to the Gulag on trumped up charges. One need only read the memoirs of Soviet dissidents to find many examples of this occurring.[141]

The restrictions put in place by the Soviet authorities, although making the mass publication of material difficult, did not completely prevent *samizdat* from being reproduced. Indeed, there were cases when extensive amounts of *samizdat* were produced without the knowledge of the Soviet authorities. For example, *Chronicle* No. 34 reports a KGB raid on a Latvian farmhouse in October 1974 which uncovered a working printing press being used by a group of Baptists, along with nine tons of paper and 15,000 copies of the Gospels.[142]

Whilst the KGB were clearly intent on suppressing underground literature of this sort in this period, their record of success is very mixed. The arrest and detainment of Peter Yakir and

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[139] For more on the publication of religious material in the Soviet Union see. J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: A Contemporary History* (London, 1986) pp. 149-171; and M. Bourdeaux, *The Gospels Triumph over Communism* (Minneapolis, 1991) p. 115-118.

[140] L. Labedz, 'The Strains of Intellectual Life in Russia; Why Soviet writers may think of leaving', *The Times*, 1 August 1969, p. 6.

[141] For example see Solzhenitsyn, *The Oak and the Calf*, pp. 103-159.

[142] Amnesty International, *Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 34, 35 and 36 p. 53.

Victor Krasin in 1972, both of whom were keenly involved in the production of the *Chronicle*, suspended its *samizdat* publication. It only returned in the Spring of 1974 when other dissidents restarted its publication.[143] The suspension of the *Chronicle* in this period can be directly attributed to the success of the KGB, who found and imprisoned its editors and many of its contributors. However, the fact that it returned in *samizdat* in 1974, continued in publication for another decade, and was regularly smuggled out to the West highlights both the KGB's shortcomings in preventing this type of dissent and the determination of those behind the *Chronicle* in disseminating this material. Essentially, *samizdat* was a largely uncontrollable way in which dissidents could spread information without interference from state censors.

Samizdat material was extensively used by British human rights group who researched Soviet dissent. This material offered an uncensored view of the Soviet authorities, and exposed some of the abuses of power that they conducted. Much of the evidence that these groups based their campaigns on was from *samizdat* smuggled to the West. In several cases, human rights groups translated and reproduced *samizdat* verbatim, illustrating that they felt its content was persuasive enough without any additional commentary.

The content of the *Chronicle* itself has been utilised by historians and contemporary scholars alike as a reliable insight into the workings of the dissident movement in Russia in the 1960s and 1970s. Its frank style of reporting events of human rights abuse was arguably its greatest strength, in which it presented evidence on the events without allowing ideology or politically driven rhetoric to take over. This was vastly different from the bulk of *samizdat*, which is full of political argument and the opinion of writers. One need only consider the *samizdat* works of dissident authors such as Amalrik, Sakharov, and Solzhenitsyn to see how forthright these opinions were.[144] Joshua Rubenstein has highlighted how clear this emotionally detached approach was in the first edition of the *Chronicle*, which focused on the aftermath of the 1968

[143] Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective* p. 132.

[144] For example see A. Amalrik, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (London, 1970); A. Sakharov, *Reflections on Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* (New York, 1968); and A. Solzhenitsyn, *A Letter to Soviet Leaders* (London, 1974).

trial of Galanskov and Ginzburg and could easily have been more accusatory in its reporting.[145] This approach became a key trait of the *Chronicle*, and one that undoubtedly boosted its reputation amongst Western commentators who sometimes gave the impression in their articles that it was a news bulletin rather than a dissident journal.[146] This frank style of reporting had direct parallels with the way in which Amnesty operated, focusing on evidence and impartiality over ideologically tainted reporting. This may go some way to suggest why the *Chronicle* was so readily received by Amnesty, and why it was used extensively by the organisation in its reporting.

Another great benefit of the *Chronicle* over other *samizdat* journals produced in this period is the national scope that it had. Some *samizdat* pieces had a clear regional focus, such as the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church* which unsurprisingly focused on issues regarding the Catholic faith in Lithuania. On the other hand, the *Chronicle of Current Events* covered events from all over the Soviet Union. Marshall Shatz notes that the *Chronicle* was able to cover events in both small towns and major cities, and formed a nationwide information network across the Soviet Union.[147] This national scope is important when considering the information that the *Chronicle* contained, and how it was utilised in the West. Rather than focusing on events from the major cities such as Moscow and Leningrad, the nationwide scope of the *Chronicle* further illustrated the objective approach that it took, suggesting that it reported on matters regarding their importance, rather than their proximity to major cities in the Soviet Union. When the sheer size of the Soviet Union is taken into account, alongside the spread of the so-called Gulag Archipelago across the breadth of the country, this is an essential point to make in order to reinforce the journals impartiality.

The desire for objectivity in the *Chronicle* was arguably driven by an aspiration from its editors to achieve and maintain the standards set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), rather than adopt a political attack on the Soviet system itself. The importance of the UDHR for the editors of the *Chronicle* is clear, and each edition of the journal contained a

[145] Rubenstein, *Soviet Dissidents*, p. 100.
[146] For example, see B. Levin, 'Russia's Political Asylums', *The Times*, 12 June 1973, p. 16.
[147] Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective*, p. 132.

quotation of Article 19 on its front page. That Article 19 refers explicitly to freedoms of opinion and expression is revealing about the direction that these dissidents wished to take, aiming for a *glasnost* (openness) which, somewhat ironically, would later play a large part in the collapse of the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev.[148] This insistence on freedom of speech had much in common with Amnesty's main objectives for prisoners of conscience and can be related directly to the principles Benenson set out in 'The Forgotten Prisoners'. Amnesty clearly recognised the *Chronicle's* explicit support for freedom of conscience, and noted in its June 1979 International Newsletter that the journal was 'a dispassionate, uncensored source of information' and 'remains the most important source of information on violations of human rights in the Soviet Union today'.[149]

The output and material that the *Chronicle* produced had no precedent in the history of Russian intellectual nonconformism. Literature produced by Soviet dissidents in the 1960s and 1970s has many similarities to other literary works from Russian history. For example, Martin Malia described Solzhenitsyn as an author who resurrected the dissenting traditions of the Russian literary greats such as Fyodor Dostoevsky and Lev Tolstoy.[150] Marshall Shatz has spoken at length about the historical precedent that Soviet dissidents found themselves in, becoming part of a longstanding tradition of dissent in Russian history.[151] Even the internal debates among Soviet dissidents have been compared to the division of intellectuals in pre-revolutionary Imperial Russia between Westernisers and Slavophiles.[152] Whilst the *Chronicle* fits into the convention of intellectual nonconformity that is ever-present in Russian history, it can be seen to have broken with this tradition and formed a new path. Philip Boobbyer notes that there are some similarities between the *Chronicle* and *Liberation*, a journal produced by Petr Struve in early twentieth

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[148] Article 19 of the UDHR states that, 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information through any media and regardless of frontiers.' For a full text of the UDHR see 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights', at http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml [accessed 28 March 2011].

[149] Amnesty International, '50th issue of 'A chronicle' published', *Amnesty International Newsletter*, Vol. 9, No. 6 (June 1979), IDC, fiche no. D65 [No Ref].

[150] Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes*, p. 394.

[151] Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective*, especially pp. 12 – 63.

[152] For more on this comparison, see D. Kelley, *The Solzhenitsyn-Sakharov Dialogue: Politics, Society and the Future* (Connecticut, 1982).

century, but does not suggest that it was born out of this tradition. Instead, Boobbyer points towards the unifying force of both of these journals and is right to suggest that the importance of the *Chronicle* was that for a period it that brought elements of the highly divided Soviet dissident movement together.[153] Whilst it would be erroneous to suggest that the *Chronicle* was **the** journal of the dissident movement, its reportage on dissenting figures in the Soviet Union in this period was unrivalled. Despite the variety of differing ideological positions present amongst Soviet dissenters, the *Chronicle's* objective approach meant that it reported on all aspects of this often fragmented movement.

Translated extracts of the *Chronicle* were first published English in 1972 in *Uncensored Russia*, a volume edited by Peter Reddaway, who compiled and translated the first eleven editions of the *Chronicle of Current Events*.[154] Instead of reproducing the first eleven editions in a verbatim fashion, Reddaway approached the content thematically. This allowed for the development of events reported over several editions of the *Chronicle* to be easily portrayed without the need for extensive commentary from the editor. *Uncensored Russia* was broken into seven main sections, and used the analogy of a river to describe each section. These were the mirror of the movement; the main stream; the movement in captivity; individual streams; mainstream publications; tributaries and dams. This division allowed detailed analysis of national movements alongside individual dissident cases, specific dissident works, and the response of the Soviet authorities neatly bringing together the multifaceted dimensions of the dissident movement. The subtitles of these divisions also suggest that Reddaway saw the *Chronicle* as a vehicle with which information on dissenters could flow from the tributaries of the Russian provinces, through individual national streams into the mainstream of dissident activity in Moscow, and, to extend the metaphor further, on to the West if it could avoid the dams of the Soviet censors. This identification may also suggest the role that Reddaway felt he played in this flow of information, providing an avenue for it to be spread out further in the West.

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[153] Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia*, p. 85.
[154] Reddaway, *Uncensored Russia*.

Somewhat unusually for such a collection of primary material, Reddaway interspersed *Uncensored Russia* with frequent annotations. These notations are short on the whole, and do not detract from the material presented. If anything, they are used primarily to thread the extracts together into a more fluid narrative. These annotations make the material presented more accessible to the reader and offered a sense of context to extracts that can at times feel disjointed due to the thematic approach. Making this material accessible for a wide audience was particularly important, and it was undoubtedly influential on an array of activists. Whilst Reddaway's work is commendable for its ability to compile eleven editions of densely informative material into a workable and fluid narrative, the real value of the *Chronicle* for human rights activists in the West lay in its individual editions, and the up-to-date information they provided on Soviet human rights abuses.

Reddaway oversaw translations of editions of the *Chronicle* for his own research, translating material himself or enlisting the assistance of others who were interested in their contents. For example Xenia Dennen, who was later to become heavily involved in publicising the persecution of religious believers in the Soviet Union through her work with Keston College, was one of those who assisted him, translating edition No.7.[155] Reddaway had originally circulated these translations to his friends and colleagues whom he thought would be interested, using the mailing system at the London School of Economics and Political Science where he was a Lecturer in Government. This was initially done without charge to Reddaway's close friends and colleagues, something that he recalled developed in a very spontaneous and *ad hoc* manner.[156] The distribution of these early translations of the *Chronicle* illustrate how information on Soviet dissenters spread from Reddaway through to a wider network of concerned individuals. This is indicative of the early network of activists that was developing in Britain in the 1970s, of which Reddaway played a central role.

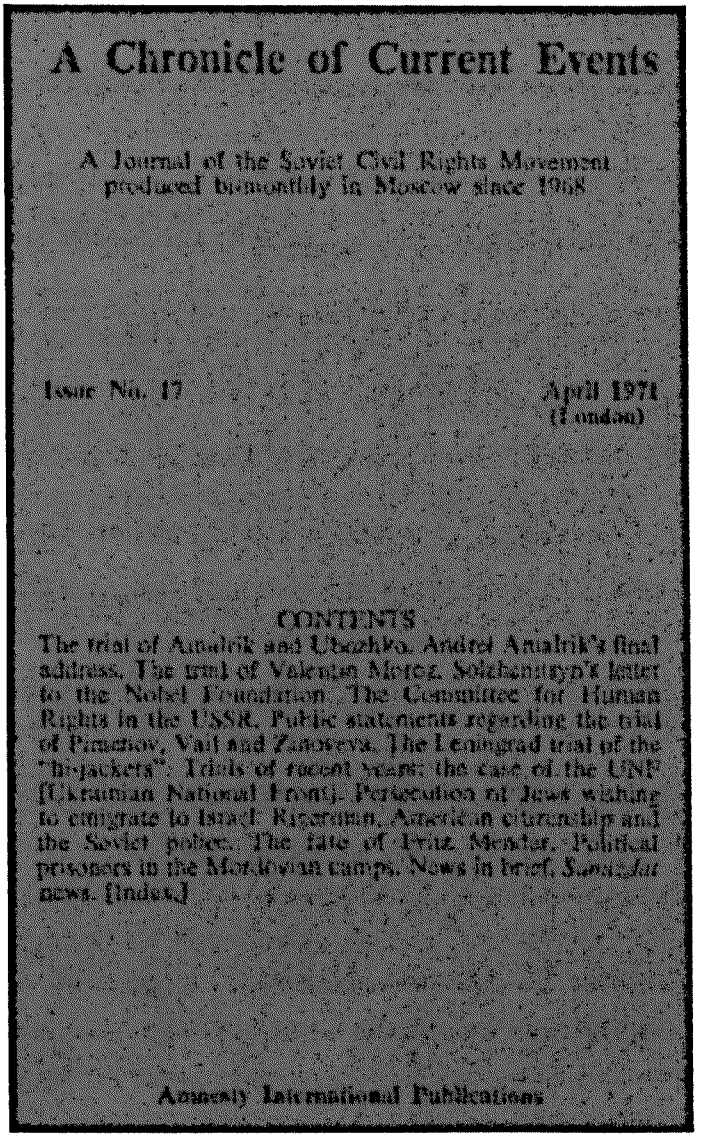
[155] Interview with Peter Reddaway dated 5 July 2010.
[156] Ibid.

The popularity of these translations of the *Chronicle* quickly grew, especially with the public success of *Uncensored Russia*. Reddaway recalled that unlike conventional academic books, he earned 'a bit of money' from the publication of *Uncensored Russia*.[157] The relative success of this work may be attributed to the interest in the position of dissenters in the Soviet Union, who became more regularly reported in the Western media in the early 1970s. This popularity undoubtedly proved that there was a public interest in the content of the *Chronicle*. Reddaway approached Amnesty about publishing regular translations of the *Chronicle*, a decision that he recalled being a simple one for him to make. Amnesty was the only human rights organisation in this period that had an established reputation of impartiality, the ability to produce the *Chronicle*, and one that Reddaway had personal links with.[158]

Amnesty had a clear interest in the content of the *Chronicle*, noting in its annual report from 1971 that it was the organisation's main source of information regarding the latest position of Soviet prisoners of conscience.[159] Amnesty agreed to publish an English version of the *Chronicle* from early 1971 onwards, going on to publish complete translations of the journal from numbers 17 through to 64 in 1984.[160] This was notably new territory for Amnesty, who admitted in their 1970-1971 annual report that it was the first time it had 'published material of this kind – i.e. material which is distributed outside the organisation, and which has not been compiled by Amnesty observers as a result of their own enquiries.'[161] This was a bold step for Amnesty, as it meant that the organisation was effectively endorsing material that it had not produced itself. Given the material contained within the *Chronicle* there was a real risk that Amnesty's campaigns could be accused of being politically motivated. That this material had come from *samizdat* and had to be smuggled out of the Soviet Union illustrates the potential for it to be slanderous or politically biased. The decision to publish this translation, and to support its production for over a

[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Amnesty International Annual Report 1970-1971, p. 58.
[160] .pdf versions of each edition of the *Chronicle* produced by Amnesty are available on the Library section of the International Secretariat's website. See http://www.amnesty.org/en/library (accessed 22 May 2012).
[161] Amnesty International Annual Report 1970-1971, p. 70.

decade, illustrates not only how important Amnesty felt this publication was, but also that it felt it was a reliable source of information.


A Chronicle of Current Events

A Journal of the Soviet Civil Rights Movement produced bimonthly in Moscow since 1968

Issue No. 17 April 1971 (London)

CONTENTS

The trial of Amalrik and Ubozhko. Andrei Amalrik's final address. The trial of Valentin Moroz. Solzhenitsyn's letter to the Nobel Foundation. The Committee for Human Rights in the USSR. Public statements regarding the trial of Pimenov, Vail and Zaitseva. The Leningrad trial of the "Hijackers". Trials of recent years: the case of the UNF [Ukrainian National Front]. Persecution of Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel. Repression. Arrests in citizenship and the Soviet police. The fate of Fritz Mender. Political prisoners in the Mordovian camps. News in brief. *Samizdat* news. [Index.]

Amnesty International Publications

Image 1.2 Cover of Amnesty's Translation of A Chronicle of Current Events, No. 17, April 1971.

Amnesty's support for the *Chronicle* was clearly long term, with its support for the translation and publication of the journal lasting for over a decade. The longevity of this support was confirmed in 1974 when Amnesty invested heavily in its publishing capabilities, and expanded the potential output of the organisation in order to deal explicitly with the demands of publishing the *Chronicle*.[162] Despite attempts in the later years to transfer the complete publishing of *Chronicle* to Writers and Scholars International (WSI), the group behind the free speech

[162] Amnesty International Annual Report 1974-1975, p. 34.

publication *Index on Censorship*, Amnesty maintained an element of control over the *Chronicle*. From no.32 onwards, WSI dealt with the publication of the *Chronicle* in Amnesty's name, and provided copies for Amnesty to sell on.[163] WSI's involvement with the *Chronicle* became much firmer from number 39 onwards, when the journal effectively became a WSI publication produced for Amnesty. This shift in publisher, however, is impossible to discern from the copies of the *Chronicle* itself, which was still produced as an Amnesty publication.

WSI would have been unable to effectively disseminate the *Chronicle* on their own merit, and needed Amnesty's name to be attached to the *Chronicle* in order to secure public trust in the contents of the publication. Philip Spender, writing on behalf of WSI, noted the importance of Amnesty's endorsement of the *Chronicle* in a letter to Mark Grantham of Amnesty's publication department in June 1976. He noted that:

> The endorsement of the *Chronicle* by Amnesty seems to us very important because of the general esteem in which Amnesty is held...We think removal of all connection with Amnesty is bound to raise questions in the minds (and perhaps the mouths too) of the public at large. We are aware that the editors in Moscow have made it known that they attach great importance to Amnesty's endorsement. One supposes that the KGB etc. are similarly inhibited from attacking too carelessly a journal explicitly or unambiguously connected with Amnesty, whom they know to be capable of effective protest.[164]

This neatly illustrates not only Amnesty's own position in Britain in this period, but also how much its own reputation was needed to secure the success of the *Chronicle*. Even though Amnesty was no longer producing this translation, had this endorsement not been provided the reputation of the journal would have plummeted. That this could have impacted both on Amnesty's work for prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union, and on the physical safety of those involved with the *Chronicle* in the Soviet Union may have forced its hand. The success of the *Chronicle* was directly related to its relationship with Amnesty. This is an area where Amnesty's influence on the British discourse on Soviet dissent can be easily noted. The translated editions of the *Chronicle* were the main source of information regarding Soviet human rights violations

[163] 'Resolution for Council – A Chronicle of Current Events', June 1976, IEC doc. no. 107 IISG [ACT81/IEC76].
[164] Letter from Philip Spender to Mark Grantham, 'THE CHRONICLE No. 39 and following', 18 June 1976, IEC doc. 107, IISG [No Ref].

readily available to Western commentators. Had it not been supported by Amnesty, this publication would not have been as readily used by journalists and academics.

Reddaway maintained his involvement in the *Chronicle* throughout the time that it was published by Amnesty, editing and translating the journal, initially without requesting a fee. When the editions of the journal grew, Amnesty were able to supply finance with which Reddaway was able to pay for translators to assist him and to claim a small amount for his own editorial work.[165] This highlights the role that Reddaway played for Amnesty, who utilised his experience and expertise in this area rather than bringing the editorship of the journal into its research department. This can be linked to the changes in Amnesty's research department in the early 1970s, which will be discussed later in this chapter, which sought to increase its academic repute. Keeping Reddaway involved with its production of the *Chronicle* was an undoubted advantage to Amnesty's academic credentials.

Despite reproducing translations of the *Chronicle* and other *samizdat* documents from the Soviet Union, Amnesty attempted to distance themselves from a full affirmation of their contents. For example, in the introduction to a reproduction of an open letter from a victim of Soviet psychiatric abuse dated September 1984, it is clearly noted that Amnesty could not verify all evidence presented in the letter, and that it was only being reproduced as 'it gives interesting background information'.[166] This can be seen as a 'get out' clause in case some of the evidence presented in this *samizdat* material proved to be false, something that protected Amnesty from any errors in the material which could have been discovered at a later date. The same sort of claim exists in Amnesty's production of the *Chronicle*, which contained a reoccurring paragraph in its preface to the translation stating that:

> Since Amnesty International has no control over the writing of *A Chronicle of Current Events*, we cannot guarantee the veracity of all its contents. Nor do we take responsibility for any opinions or judgements which may appear or be implied in its contents. Yet Amnesty International continues to regard *A Chronicle of Current Events* as an authentic and reliable source of information on

[165] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010.
[166] 'Translation of an open letter from a former victim of Soviet psychiatric abuse', September 1984, MRC, MSS.34/4/1/USSR/95, [No Ref].

matters of direct concern to our own work for the worldwide observance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[167]

This reference first appeared in Amnesty's preface to *Chronicles* No. 28, 29, 30 and 31 which were published jointly in a collected edition in April 1975. This multiple publication of *Chronicle* numbers in one edition was due to the attacks on the journals writers and editors by the KGB which had prevented its *samizdat* publication in the Soviet Union from October 1972 to September 1974.[168] These numbers appeared simultaneously in *samizdat*, showing that the *Chronicle's* contributors had continued writing throughout this period, and had only released material after the KGB attacks had eased, covering the period of non-publication. This multiple edition was the first time that Amnesty's reproduction of the *Chronicle* had included a signed preface, something that continued through to its final edition in 1984. Whilst the text of the preface changed slightly for each edition, updating its content slightly to adjust for new developments, it remained consistent in tone and content throughout Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle*. The last paragraph of each preface, quoted above, notably remains identical throughout. The consistency with which this section was reproduced and its place within the preface itself suggest that it was a conscious and calculated decision by the authors to be replicated in this manner. This extract puts Amnesty's unusual relationship with the *Chronicle* clearly and concisely; highlighting the importance and authenticity of the information that it presented, whilst at the same time distancing itself from direct responsibility for its content. It is also revealing of the difficulties in using *samizdat* material as the basis for wide campaigns, and that in the context of the Cold War, all material obtained from behind the Iron Curtain had to be treated with caution.

Despite these safety clauses inserted into these publications, the sheer effort that Amnesty went through to publish the *Chronicle* show the support that it was giving to its contents. By publishing a translation of the *Chronicle* under its own name, Amnesty clearly put its own reputation on the reliability of the claims that it presented. This was a bold approach to take

[167] Amnesty International, *Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 28, 29, 30 and 31, April 1975. p. 5.
[168] 'A Chronicle of Current Events', September 1974, Amnesty ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].

in the context of the Cold War, where information received from behind the Iron Curtain was often met with scepticism due to the difficulties in proving its reliability. Despite this, Amnesty clearly stood behind the reliability and importance of the journal, and noted in a press release dated 23 May 1978 that the decision to publish the *Chronicle* 'reflected the high respect the journal has earned through its meticulous attention to accuracy and its strict restriction to cases of violation of the human rights proclaimed in the UDHR.[169] The decision of the *Chronicle*'s editors to base their actions on the UDHR aligned their action with Amnesty's philosophy. It could be argued that the *Chronicle* was in this sense a perfect fit for Amnesty, and a journal that it could support with ease due to a common moral ground.

Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle* also had potential financial benefits for the organisation. Journalists, libraries and universities were likely to have been keen to utilise the material presented in these translations. Indeed, it is clear from the current catalogues of several British universities that many institutions held long term subscriptions to this publication.[170] The demand for copies of the *Chronicle* in English from these individuals and organisations would have likely been enough to generate a steady income for Amnesty. The success of *Uncensored Russia* generated a steady income for its author, and the reception of Reddaway's early translations of the *Chronicle* which circulated via the LSE mailing system also suggested a captive market for this material. This is something that the organisation clearly recognised, noting in their 1970-71 annual report that the transfer of funds to a Publications Department Account was to finance the publication of the *Chronicle*, aiming to make this publication a source of profit for the organisation.[171] This financial implication for publishing a translation of the *Chronicle* must be kept in mind when assessing Amnesty's support for the journal.

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[169] Amnesty International, 'Amnesty International Publishes Further Numbers of Chronicle of Current Events', 23 May 1978, IDC, fiche no. C11, [No Ref].

[170] For example, the Libraries at Durham University, the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, the University of Kent, the University of Manchester and the University of Sheffield all contain sets of Amnesty's translation of the *Chronicle of Current Events.*

[171] Amnesty International Annual Report 1970-71, p. 20.

Whilst reproduction of the *Chronicle* appears to have been in keeping with the groups wider aims, financial incentives had a significant influence on its decision to publish it. By the 1970s, Amnesty had become increasingly concerned with its financial situation. In particular, the British section of Amnesty was saved from a 'disastrous cash crisis' in September 1975 by large donations from several individuals.[172] That the British Section was arguably amongst the most supported national Amnesty section suggests that other national groups would have doubtless been in a more difficult financial position. Amnesty's International Council Minutes from September 1973 include a document written by Dirk Börner entitled 'Development of Amnesty International Including National Sections and Fundraising'.[173] This document discusses the way in which Amnesty could develop its fundraising strategies, including Christmas card campaigns, the development of a fundraising manual to be sent to local groups and taking steps to 'obtain tax-privileges'. Whilst these are perhaps obvious developments for an organisation such as Amnesty to have taken, the language used in this document is particularly jarring when it is remembered that it is a human rights organisation. Alongside suggestions for developments in this document, Börner asks several questions that appear very out of place for members of a human rights organisation. These include:

'What do we sell?'[174]

'What is our product?'[175]

'Who is our customer?'[176]

'What is our sale force?'[177]

These business concepts do not sit easily in discussion of the development of a human rights organisation committed to the release of prisoners of conscience from around the world.

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[172] Amnesty International British Section, 'Director's report for Executive Committee Meeting on 11th November 1975' British Section Documents no. 1278, IISG [No Ref].
[173] 'Development of Amnesty International Including National Sections and Fundraising', September 1983, ICM no. 13, IISG [No Ref].
[174] Ibid, p.2
[175] Ibid, p.2
[176] Ibid, p.4
[177] Ibid, p.5

This is something that Börner himself recognises, apologising in the conclusion of this report for using such terminology and 'business thinking'.[178] This document highlights the financial considerations that Amnesty's leadership had addressed at this time, something that undoubtedly impacted on the way it approached the request to reproduce the *Chronicle*. It is also indicative of the wider changes Amnesty made to the way it thought about its work in the early 1970s in the process of becoming a more professional and efficient organisation.

The potential financial benefits to Amnesty of publishing the *Chronicle* was likely to have made the decision to publish it a much easier one to make. The minutes of IEC meetings from the early 1970s breaks down the mathematics behind making such a decision. Minutes from the July 1973 meeting state that if Amnesty were to continue to publish the *Chronicle*, the US section of Amnesty would guaranteed to purchase 500 copies and that the American publisher Kronika Press was also willing to take 2,000 copies.[179] Earlier minutes from the March 1971 meeting of the IEC note that a print run of 2,500 copies of No. 16 of the *Chronicle* would need to sell 1,000 copies for Amnesty to breakeven on their investment.[180] A cursory look at these numbers imply that Amnesty would have made a profit on the *Chronicle* by selling it to its American section and Kronika press alone without taking into account the clear market for this publication in English speaking nations.

Given the clear importance of the *Chronicle* for Amnesty's campaigns on the Soviet Union, and the clear ideological risks that the group took in undertaking this publication, it would be a crude slight to claim that the main reasons for its publication was to make a profit for the group. Yet it is apparent that had this publication not been financially viable, Amnesty's support for the publication would have diminished. The potential to produce a journal that would have assisted Amnesty's work whilst generating a profit was clearly of much benefit to the organisation. The finances of Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle* is particularly revealing about the wider public

[178] Ibid, p. 11
[179] 'A Chronicle of Current Events', September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].
[180] 'Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting', March 1971, IEC no. 51, IISG [No Ref].

impact that this journal had. That Amnesty was able to make a profit on the *Chronicle* illustrates that it was well received, and suggests that it was widely held as an important journal.

Although Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle* appears to have been seamless on the outside, the decision to support its publication was met with resistance internally. Leading Amnesty members such as Sean MacBride opposed the publication of this material, and attempted to attain support within Amnesty to stop its publication. Indeed, the publication of the early editions of the *Chronicle* from 1971 to 1973 was noted to have aroused 'mild controversy' from sections of the hierarchy of Amnesty.[181] Despite this opposition, Amnesty pressed forward with the publication, with Peter Reddaway highlighting the efforts of Zbynek Zeman, the head of the research department, in persuading them to do so.[182]

There was a clear concern about publishing the *Chronicle* from members of the International Council. An ICM document from September 1974 notes International Council members felt that by publishing the *Chronicle*, there was a risk that Amnesty would be linked directly with the Soviet dissident movement.[183] It was feared that this direct link would impact on Amnesty's efforts in assisting prisoners of conscience both in the Soviet Union and in other nations. This concern is directly linked to Amnesty's attempts to maintain impartiality in an international political climate that favoured partiality. From its inception, Amnesty's leading members showed a deep concern for maintaining impartiality. Indeed, in the first document ever released by the organisation, it is noted that Amnesty's purpose was to 'concentrate upon drawing attention impartially to prisoners of conscience in countries around the world'.[184] At the September 1972 ICM, the International Council noted how publishing the *Chronicle* might violate

[181] 'The Chronicle of Current Events, Note from Herbart Ruitenberg and George Siemensma, September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].
[182] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010.
[183] 'A Chronicle of Current Events', September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].
[184] Amnesty, 'Action to free political prisoners, international movement formed, secretariat in London', ICM doc. no. 1, IISG [No Ref]. Dated unknown, approximately mid-1961.

its impartial status, and suggested that each edition contain a reference that the contents should not be considered as official Amnesty material.[185]

It was suggested at this September 1974 meeting of the ICM that Amnesty should 'try to find a similar document published regularly by an underground civil rights movement in another country, and reprint it as a "balance" to the *Chronicle*'. The response to this suggestion was simple – 'there is, in fact, no other regular publication like the *Chronicle*: it is unique'.[186] In fact, it could be argued that publication of the *Chronicle* was in itself a political balancing act, showing that Amnesty reacted to human rights violation in left-wing regimes as their actions prior to this had been predominantly against right-wing governments – something that the International Council also recognised at this meeting.[187] The IEC also discussed how the publication of the *Chronicle* would affect the Amnesty's political balance, and unanimously agreed that it should support publication 'at as reasonable a cost as possible'.[188] If anything, the debates about the *Chronicle* and Amnesty's impartiality at this meeting of the ICM shows how importantly the concern for balance was taken by the organisation's leadership, and how difficult it was far the group to maintain a sense of neutrality.

Amnesty's concern for impartiality can be seen most explicitly in the appointment of Derek Roebuck as the Head of Research in 1979. Given Roebuck's political background as a former member of the Communist Party of Australia and his clear left-wing leanings, this can be seen as an appointment to illustrate Amnesty's impartiality in the context of the Cold War. This appointment was met with much criticism from high ranking figures within Amnesty, especially given his background in partisan attacks on the US and articles he had published in the North Korean press.[189] Roebuck's appointment was also the trigger for the prominent American human rights activist Edward Kline to leave his position as the director of AI-USA. In a letter to AI-USA,

[185] 'Report and Decisions of the 5th International Council Meeting', 8-10 September 1972, ICM doc. no. 26, IISG [No Ref], p. 11 – see point 41 in particular.
[186] 'A Chronicle of Current Events', September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref]. Emphasis from original document.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Letter from Mark Benenson to Thomas Hammarberg 'Re: Derek Roebuck', 22 November 1978, IEC no. 144, IISG [No Ref].

Kline noted that his resignation was due to Roebuck's appointment, stating that 'I believe that dedication to the ideology of human rights and not a partisan political approach is the proper qualification for the post of Head of Research of A[mnesty] I[nternational]'.[190] Kline went on to develop strong links with Andrei Sakharov, one of the most prominent Soviet dissidents, and would have undoubtedly been a great asset to Amnesty's Soviet campaigns.

Not all national sections were against Roebuck's appointment, with the board of the Finnish section strongly supporting his appointment in a letter to Martin Ennals. They noted that 'it is of tremendous importance, trying to make people in this country realize that A[mnesty] I[nternational] is politically independent, to be able to say that the Head of Research is a communist'.[191] The differing perspectives of Roebuck's appointment show how Amnesty desire to stay politically impartial had to be tactfully navigated in order to please all of its members – something that was often an impossible task in the context of the Cold War.

Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle* had a substantial effect on the organisation's image in the Soviet Union itself. It put Amnesty 'on the map' with Soviet human rights circles, something that arguably assisted the good reputation that Amnesty built among Soviet dissidents.[192] In a report to the IEC in July 1975, Amnesty's Soviet researcher Clayton Yeo noted that if Amnesty were to stop publication of the *Chronicle* there would be a 'severe drop in A[mnesty] I[nternational]'s prestige within the human rights movement in the USSR' and that any decision to stop publication would probably be irreversible.[193] Yeo's statement clearly shows the options Amnesty had regarding the *Chronicle* once it had begun publishing its English translation – continue publication of the journal and maintain the support from Soviet human rights activists or cease publication and attempt to develop stronger links with the Soviet authorities. Given

[190] Letter from Edward Kline to David Hinkley, AI-USA, 30 January 1979, IEC no. 144, IISG [No Ref].
[191] Letter to Martin Ennals from the Board of the Finnish section of Amnesty, 16 December 1978, IEC no. 144, IISG [No Ref].
[192] 'The Chronicle of Current Events, Note from Herbart Ruitenberg and George Siemensma, September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].
[193] C. Yeo, 'Amnesty International's publishing of A Chronicle of Current Events', July 1975, IEC no. 94, IISG [No Ref].

Amnesty's ethos in supporting 'the forgotten prisoner', the support of its membership would have undoubtedly been for the former option.

Amnesty's relationship with the Soviet authorities was severely affected by its publication of the *Chronicle*, something which might have been of use in petitioning for prisoners of conscience. In reports of early Amnesty meetings with representatives of the Soviet Government it is apparent that efforts were made to persuade Amnesty to stop its support for the *Chronicle*.[194] The impact that good relations between Amnesty and the Soviet authorities could have had would have been minimal. Given Amnesty's clear position of support for prisoners of conscience who had actively campaigned against the Soviet authorities, this was a relationship that was unlikely to have been successful. Even in countries where Amnesty has a relatively good relationship with the authorities, such as the US and Britain, the organisation's opinions could easily be dismissed or ignored.[195] Some of the Amnesty hierarchy noted in September 1974 that discussions with Soviet officials 'do not appear likely to become fruitful'.[196] The publication of the *Chronicle* was arguably the main step that put Amnesty in direct conflict with the Soviet authorities, falling into active support of dissidents. This was also a point of no return for the organisation, despite the potential ties that it had with the Soviet authorities through figures such as Derek Roebuck and Sean MacBride. It is also perhaps unsurprising that propaganda attacks by the Soviet authorities, which culminated in the more literal attacks on members of its Moscow group, occurred after Amnesty's commitment to publish the *Chronicle*.

Amnesty's decision to publish the *Chronicle* appears initially to have been simple – reproduction of material on human rights abuse in the Soviet Union was something in line with the ethos and aims of the organisation. However, it is clear that a range of political, financial and personal factors meant that the decision to support this publication was by no means a

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[194] 'Amnesty International's Relations with Governments – Case Study: The Soviet Union', July 1975, IEC no. 92, IISG [No Ref].

[195] For examples of this see Power, *Like Water on Stone* pp. 165-181, 252-280 and *Amnesty! When They Are All Free!*

[196] 'The Chronicle of Current Events, Note from Herbart Ruitenberg and George Siemensma, September 1974, ICM no. 15, IISG [No Ref].

straightforward one. By supporting the *Chronicle* and publicising it extensively, Amnesty arguably became an extension of the Soviet dissident movement, despite all attempts to distance itself from the journal's content. Given the significance that was attributed to the spread of information for the dissidents, this support was of the utmost importance, publicising their plight in the English speaking world. This support, however, arguably came at the cost of unbalancing Amnesty's political impartiality. This was, in short, anything but a simple decision.

On its publication, the *Chronicle* was used extensively by journalists as a reliable source on Soviet human rights violation and the position of the dissident movement. From the early 1970s onwards, there were an array of newspaper articles which utilised the *Chronicle* as their main source of primary material for their assertions. For example, Bernard Levin utilised material from the *Chronicle* in several of his articles in *The Times* on human rights violation in the Soviet Union. In an article on the reports of the Soviet political abuse of psychiatry, Levin quotes the *Chronicle* on the case of Nikolai Samsonov as if it were an official publication, with no questions regarding its reliability.[197] Levin was full of praise for the efforts of the *Chronicle*, and showed particular admiration for the systematic nature of their work in face of the Soviet authorities.[198] Indeed, the manner in which this publication is referred to would leave an uninformed reader unaware of the fact that this publication was an underground dissident journal that was being smuggled to the West by activists. Many other commentators used the material presented in the *Chronicle* in their reports. In an article on a series of death threats against Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Frank Crepeau of the Associated Press references the *Chronicle* as a respected publication in much the same way as Levin did.[199] Michael Scammel also went as far as to call the *Chronicle* a 'news journal', highlighting the manner in which the information it contained was received by British commentators.[200]

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[197] B. Levin, 'Russia's Political Asylums', *The Times*, 12 June 1973, p. 16.
[198] B. Levin, 'This 15-second indictment of Soviet tyranny', *The Times*, 16 November 1977, p. 18.
[199] F. Crepeau, 'Solzhenitsyn speaks of threats against his life', *The Times*, 29 August 1973, p. 1.
[200] M. Scammell, 'The Soviet opposition: part one of a series by Michael Scammell', *The Times*, 10 August 1981, p. 5; and M. Scammell, 'The Soviet opposition, part two: the liberal democrats', *The Times*, 11 August 1981 p. 5.

Peter Reddaway also utilised evidence from the *Chronicle* to base a series of articles that reported the latest information on the position of Soviet dissidents in *The Times*. These reports appeared on a regular basis from 1969 to 1978, each containing direct reference to the latest material on Soviet human rights violation noted in the *Chronicle*.[201] The frequency of these reports in the early 1970s suggests that Reddaway was keen to show the sort of information that was presented in the *Chronicle* in the national press. As Reddaway was one of the first to receive copies of the *Chronicle* in the West, and was the editor of Amnesty's English translations, it is unsurprising that he published these stories before other journalists.

Whilst the *Chronicle* was often referred to in the British press as an 'underground' and 'clandestine' journal, its reliability and accuracy were rarely questioned.[202] The fact that it was widely accepted as a reliable source of information about the position of dissidents in the Soviet Union can be directly attributed to that fact that it was published in the West by Amnesty. Had the *Chronicle* been produced by an organisation without this reputation, it is very unlikely that it would have been referred to in this manner by these journalists. As these journalists were one of the main ways in which this information was distributed to the wider public, Amnesty's reputation was of the utmost importance for the success of the *Chronicle*.

Amnesty's publication of English translations of the *Chronicle* affected the British discourse on Soviet dissent on two main levels. Firstly, it acted as a key piece of primary material for contemporary commentators on the dissident movement, who as noted above used it extensively in their reports. Whilst the *Chronicle* would have been available to those who spoke Russian and had appropriate connections, this translation opened up a wider audience to this material in the West. Information drawn from the *Chronicle* is likely to have played a large role in informing smaller, active human rights organisations, such as local Amnesty groups and

[201] For good examples of this use of the *Chronicle* in his articles, see P. Reddaway, 'Notes from 'underground', Russia's prodigal fugitives', *The Times*, 9 August 1969, p. 6; P. Reddaway, 'Soviet exiles under threat of new trial', *The Times*, 23 August 1969, p. 6; P. Reddaway, 'Dissident's trust in Russia's future', *The Times*, 27 April 1970, p. 4; P. Reddaway, 'Moscow group joins international human rights body', *The Times*, 9 July 1971, p. 6.; and P. Reddaway, 'A good excuse for another purge', *The Times*, 29 July 1980.

[202] For examples of this see '51 Russian liberals call for amnesty and end to executions', *The Times*, 20 November 1972, p. 8; 'Wilson dilemma over Russian dissidents', *The Times*, 13 February 1975, p. 7; and 'Leningrad pupils scattered illegal leaflets', *The Times*, 9 June 1976, p. 7.

campaigns on behalf of individuals dissidents. The *Chronicle* also continues to affect the way in which historians formulate opinion on Soviet dissenters and the Soviet authorities treatment of them. It can now be considered as an important historical archive, which with the benefit of hindsight appears to have been both thoroughly researched and more importantly an accurate portrayal of events in the Soviet Union. Amnesty's translations mean that this material is readily available in many University libraries in Britain, and is likely to play a substantial part in future analysis of the dissidents. Thus the *Chronicle*, and particularly Amnesty translation, shaped both the contemporary discourse in Britain regarding the dissidents, and is likely to inform future historical analysis of the dissident movement, and its international reception, by Western scholars.

Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR

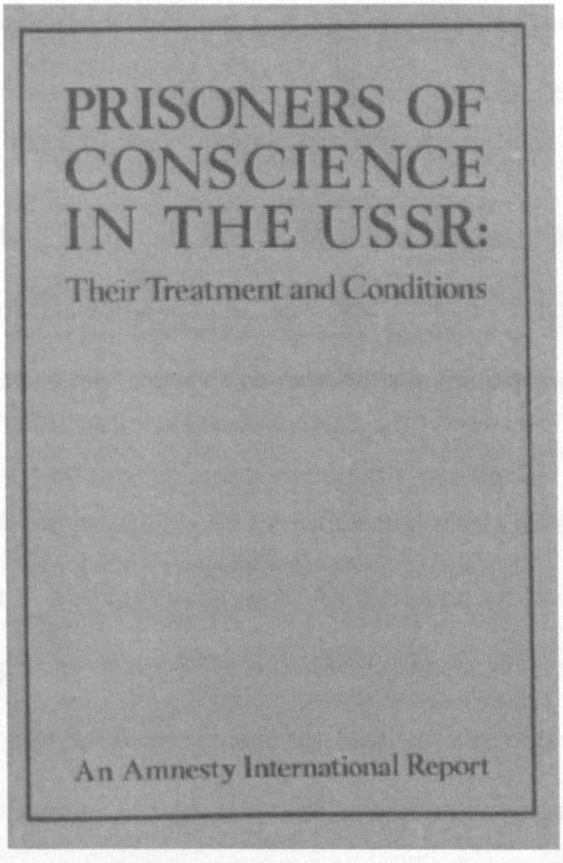

Image 1.3 – Front cover of Amnesty International, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions, (London, 1980).

Alongside the *Chronicle* and the array of press releases, Amnesty's other notable publication on the USSR was the report *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*.[203] First produced in 1975, and reprinted with a substantial revision in 1980, this work can be considered to be Amnesty's textbook on the abuse of human rights in the Soviet Union. These publications cover a vast amount of detail about the position of dissenters in the Soviet Union, ranging from Soviet law and how it applied to political opponents, the trials of these dissidents, and their treatment once imprisoned. The scope and detail to which both editions of this work go into are a testament to the amount of information that Amnesty had compiled on the Soviet Union in this period.

Amnesty, like many other human rights organisations active in reporting on Soviet persecution of dissenters, relied on factual information for their claims. As discussed above, this came mostly from *samizdat* publications such as the *Chronicle*. The 1980 edition of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* contained a brief but significant discussion of the source material used in the creation of this publication in its introductory comments. It divided the primary material used into two main categories: 'officially published materials' and 'accounts by prisoners themselves, their relatives and friends.'[204] The study of dissent in the Soviet Union has necessitated this division in primary material between 'official' and 'unofficial', with both having very different uses. Amnesty's recognition of this shows its political nous in the context of the Cold War. This is not something exemplary of Amnesty in particular in this period, but certainly illustrates that the organisation grappled with the reliability of information that it was presented with on the Soviet Union. An admission that it was consulting *samizdat* alongside official Soviet publications may have been an attempt to placate critics of the organisation who may have considered the reliance on clandestine literature as a weak and suspicious basis for the organisation to campaign on. What is most significant about this discussion of source material is that it happened in a prominent position in one of its major publications on the Soviet Union. This was a way in which Amnesty informed those who read its material that it used both of these forms of information,

[203] Amnesty International, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions* (First Edition London, 1975, Second Edition London, 1980).
[204] Amnesty, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* (1980) p. 2.

and that it had actively considered the reliability of material that it was being presented with. Not only did this make the use of *samizdat* material as a major source of information for its reports transparent, but it also justified the reasons for doing so. This frank discussion of its publications' source material illustrates the importance that Amnesty placed on the accuracy and use of primary material, and its full endorsement of the empirical method.

Reference to the primary material used for this report includes brief analysis of how 'official' and 'unofficial' materials were utilised in the writing of this publication. Official materials were noted to have provided Amnesty with 'essential information regarding official norms in prosecuting dissenters', allowing the organisation to build up a picture of the legal framework governing the treatment of prisoners of conscience.[205] However, these materials were arguably considered to contain little reliable information on the actual treatment of dissidents, something which in many cases differed substantially from legal provisions. Information on the actual treatment of dissenters was gathered by Amnesty's researchers from their own accounts, either from personal recollections or their memoirs. In this sense, it can be suggested that Amnesty used *samizdat* materials to add accuracy and colour to the carefully constructed monotone Soviet official material, highlighting its use for the organisation.[206]

In the brief discussion of the use of 'unofficial' materials in *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*, it is notable that the *Chronicle* is not mentioned. This is somewhat surprising given the effort that Amnesty had gone to in publishing regular translations of the latest editions in English. Given that on several occasions, Amnesty reports and press releases had stated that the *Chronicle* was one of the most important sources that it used in its publications on prisoners of conscience in the USSR, this omission is striking. The frequency with which the *Chronicle* is quoted throughout *Prisoners of Conscience* also highlights its importance.[207]

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[205] Amnesty, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* (1980) p. 2.
[206] Ibid, p. 2.
[207] In the 1980 edition of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*, the *Chronicle* is directly referenced over 15 times as a source of information. It is also mentioned on several occasions as an area for further information, and has clearly informed much of the information presented.

One reason behind this omission may be the distance that Amnesty had tried to create between these two publications. Both *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* and the *Chronicle* were at the forefront of Amnesty's work on the Soviet Union. Whilst they were both of much importance to Amnesty's public output on Soviet human rights violations, they could not be more different in their outlook or the way in which they presented the dissident movement in the USSR.

Considering how important *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* was for Amnesty's campaigns on the Soviet Union, it is useful to directly compare it to the group's other major publication – the *Chronicle*. Whilst the *Chronicle* was a translation of an unofficial Soviet human rights journal, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* was both Amnesty's account of the human rights violations and also in some ways an official commentary, outlining the organisation's position on the Soviet Union at the time. Unlike the translation of the *Chronicle*, in which Amnesty made clear that it was simply repeating information from a *samizdat* source, the organisation stood fully behind the accuracy of information that it produced in *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*. This material was published under its own authorship, and as such there were no hiding places for Amnesty if any claim was subsequently to be proved to be inaccurate.

Given Amnesty's composition, *Prisoners of Conscience* would have been utilised by national organisations and the local 'threes groups' to provide information on the position of human rights, and individual prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union. Local groups, who were in no sense specialists on the political context of the prisoners of conscience they supported had to rely entirely on reports such as these in their course of their activism, relying on Amnesty's name to provide enough reassurance that its contents were factually accurate. *Prisoners of Conscience* was one report of many from Amnesty on the Soviet Union, and the manner in which it would have been utilised at the local level demonstrates how much influence Amnesty's central researchers had over British discourse. These researchers were the central hub from which much information on Soviet human rights violation was spread throughout Britain, and it was through reports such as these that they had a significant influence on public opinion.

The publication of *Prisoners of Conscience* also affected Amnesty's reliance on publishing the *Chronicle* as a political balance. This is something that the Clayton Yeo noted in a report to the IEC in June 1976, stating:

> Now that A[mnesty] I[nternational] has published its own report on the Soviet Union – *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions* – the need to have the *Chronicles* to 'balance' our publications list is of far less political importance to the organisation than it was in the past.[208]

Yeo's comments to the IEC highlight how *Prisoners of Conscience* acted as stronger political balance of Amnesty's overall output than the *Chronicle* could. This is perhaps due to the fact that *Prisoners of Conscience* was authored by Amnesty researchers, and therefore the organisation had to stand fully behind the conclusions and comments made in this publication. Yeo's report to the IEC in June 1976 notes the burden that producing the *Chronicle* placed on Amnesty's Soviet researchers, particularly due to the fact that Peter Reddaway had informed the organisation that he could no longer devote time to editing the translations. Yeo became the editor of the *Chronicle* for numbers 34 and 35, something which given his other research commitments and position in the research department as Head of Europe, which will be discussed later in this chapter, had put him under much pressure.[209] When placed in this context, the desire to shift Amnesty's reliance on the *Chronicle* to *Prisoners of Conscience* as a political balance for its output may have been down to pragmatic reasons. This shift allowed a focus on Amnesty reports on the Soviet Union, rather than a reproduction of *samizdat* material.

The second edition of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* was released in 1980, the same year as the Moscow Olympic games which had drawn international criticism and a variety of boycotts. Comparisons to the Olympics held in Nazi Germany in 1936 were made as the games became a clear part of the Soviet Cold War propaganda machine. The Moscow Olympics became

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[208] M. Grantham and Clayton Yeo 'Resolution for Council – A Chronicle of Current Events', June 1976, IEC doc. 107, IISG [ACT81/IEC76]. Mark Grantham was involved with Amnesty's publication department.
[209] M. Grantham and Clayton Yeo 'Resolution for Council – A Chronicle of Current Events', June 1976, IEC doc. 107, IISG [ACT81/IEC76].

a focus for human rights groups in the West, calling for athletes and nations to boycott the games due to the Soviet human rights violations.[210]

Amnesty's publication of the second edition of *Prisoners of Conscience* was clearly designed to tap into the public awareness of the Olympic games. As a report sent to the IEC by Amnesty's campaign unit in July 1979 notes, 'because the USSR will host the Olympic Games in 1980, A[mnesty] I[nternational] will use the opportunity to educate the general public about specific human rights abuses in the Soviet Union and to press for the release of less well known prisoners'.[211] This report set out Amnesty's proposed campaign on the USSR in 1980, of which the second edition of *Prisoners of Conscience* played an integral role. This was for two main reasons. Firstly, the report was anticipated to received a great deal of publicity amongst the international media, regardless of any promotional work on Amnesty's behalf. It is clear that in an Olympic year, a report that criticised the human rights record of the host nation would attain much publicity. This is a tactic that Amnesty recently emulated in 2008, when it released a report on Chinese human rights violation to coincide with the Beijing Olympics.[212]

Secondly, *Prisoners of Conscience* was seen as the bedrock of the 1980 campaign on Soviet human rights violation. The July 1979 campaign unit report notes the lessons that Amnesty had learnt from its difficult campaign in Argentina in 1978, which coincided with the Football World Cup. One of the major difficulties faced during this campaign was that national groups were not sufficiently aware of Amnesty's specific position on Argentina. Thomas Hammarberg, Amnesty General-Secretary from 1980 to 1986, wrote in a March 1979 letter to Martin Ennals, his predecessor as General-Secretary, that Amnesty must learn from the experiences of the Argentina 1978 campaign. He insisted that the most effective part of the Argentina campaign was the early

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[210] The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry were particularly active in these campaigns. For further details, see D. Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black* (London, 1996) pp. 59-64, 104.

[211] Memo from Amnesty Campaign Unit to the IEC entitled 'Draft letter to national sections on the USSR campaign', 6 July 1979, IEC doc. no. 149, IISG [EUR 46/IEC 01/79].

[212] See BBC News 'Olympics 'worsening China rights', 2 April 2008, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/7325754.stm [accessed 2 November 2011] and Amnesty International 'China: Olympics countdown' July 2008, [ASA 18/089/2009] available at http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA17/089/2008/en/8249b304-5724-11dd-90eb-ff4596860802/asa170892008eng.pdf [accessed 2 November 2011].

factual information which greatly assisted the media. He also noted in this letter that Amnesty could be more effective in their USSR campaign in the year preceding the Olympics rather than at the events themselves.[213]

Taking Hammarberg's letter into account, it is more appropriate to see the 1980 edition of *Prisoners of Conscience* as the culmination of the USSR campaign to coincide with the Olympics, rather than a component of it, even though it was published some five months before the games themselves. In this sense, *Prisoners of Conscience* can be seen as a sort of manifesto, which outlined Amnesty's position on Soviet human rights violations. This allowed Amnesty to tap into the public interest in the Soviet Union brought about by the Olympic games without the organisation making direct moral judgements on the games themselves, something that had confused its previous campaign in Argentina. This report gave national sections the information they needed to deal with requests for information from the media without confusing Amnesty's overall position on the matter.[214]

The 1980 edition of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* notes the displeasure with which the Soviet authorities reacted to the report's 1975 edition. Unsurprisingly, Amnesty's claims of human rights abuse in this work were attributed by the Soviet authorities to the organisations 'anti-Soviet' underpinnings as an organisation.[215] Interestingly, the Soviet criticisms of the first edition of *Prisoners of Conscience* do not refer to any individual cases, raising suspicions that the Soviet authorities wanted to attack Amnesty as an organisation rather than respond to the accusations laid upon it – somewhat unsurprisingly in the context of the Cold War.

Like the *Chronicle*, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* was utilised by a variety of journalists in their reports on the Soviet Union. In an article on Russian labour camps in November 1975, Bernard Levin was extremely complementary about the quality of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR*, and devoted a substantial amount of his column to discuss its merits. Levin recognised

[213] Letter from Thomas Hammarberg to Martin Ennals, 10 March 1979, IEC doc. 147, IISG [POL 51/IEC 02/79].
[214] Memo from Amnesty Campaign Unit to the IEC entitled 'Draft letter to national sections on the USSR campaign', 6 July 1979, IEC doc. no. 149, IISG [EUR 46/IEC 01/79].
[215] Amnesty, *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* (1980) p. 1.

the attention to detail and insistence on empiricism in this report, noting that 'the work of compiling, checking and presenting the details of the appalling persecution of those in the Soviet Union who wish to criticize its rulers or institutions, or who simply wish to leave the place, has been done to an exceptionally high standard.'[216] This is something that Amnesty's research department were likely to have been glad to hear given the emphasis they give on their source material at the beginning of the report as discussed above.

The impression of this report on Levin is clear, as he also dedicated his column the following day to discussion of the reports contents. In this second account, his overwhelming support for this report is clear, noting that:

> The Amnesty report *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR,* of which I gave an account yesterday, is the kind of document that almost defies quotation, because the journalist who wants to give his readers some idea of its contents stands before it like Buridan's ass before the bundles of hay, unable to select a suitable excerpt from the vast number of equally telling passages that jostle for inclusion. I recommend purchase and perusal of the whole book.[217]

This strong endorsement of Amnesty's report in a national newspaper with the reputation of *The Times* would have had a huge effect on British discourse on Soviet abuses and on Amnesty's reputation for research in this area. Not only was Levin wholeheartedly recommending that his readers obtained a copy of this report, something that a proportion would have done, he also lent his own reputation to the reliability and quality of this report. For a journalist with Levin's reputation to claim that a report is of such a quality that it 'defies quotation' is praise in the highest form. This support from Levin was also timed with very good coverage for this Amnesty report in a prominent national newspaper. These two articles by Levin are essentially devoted to the merits of this report, and how well it had been produced, rather than the material that it covers. Indeed, these pieces can be considered as two very good adverts for *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* which doubtless increased its public profile significantly.

It is clear that the bulk of Amnesty's campaigns on the Soviet Union came from its publications, which informed both the media of the plight of the dissidents, but also gave its

[216] B. Levin, 'In detail, Amnesty's guide to the vileness of Russia's camps', *The Times*, 18 November 1975, p. 14.
[217] B. Levin, 'Soviet resistance: A harsh catalogue of suffering', *The Times,* 19 November 1975, p. 16.

groups information on the position of the prisoners of conscience that they supported. Given the centrality of these publications, it is important to analyse the conditions in which they were produced, and the researchers who wrote these reports.

Research Department

The Research Department of Amnesty International was, and remains to this day, the centre of the organisation's work. This department processed a vast amount of information regarding international human rights violation, using this to create an array of reports, press releases and publications that informed the work of the International Secretariat and local organisations. From the outside the Research Department's work on the Soviet Union appeared seamless, with a seemingly continuous supply of reports on the Soviet Union and individual dissenters. This efficient exterior does not betray the level of chaos and stress that Amnesty's Soviet researchers were faced with. Indeed, one gets a sense from reading Research Department documents and IEC minutes regarding the Soviet Union that there was a constant struggle within Amnesty to keep on top of this research, something that was managed by a group of hard working and dedicated researchers.

Personnel were key to Amnesty's work, especially so in the early days of its Research Department, initially known as the Investigation Department, with the study of individual nations often being delegated to one individual, regardless of the size of the nation. In the 1960s, this was a role predominantly filled by unpaid volunteers alongside researchers, most of whom were paid very basic wages or in luncheon vouchers.[218] The amount these individuals were paid fluctuated dramatically, suggesting that some members of staff donated much of their time for little financial reward. For example, Alex Hawson, Egypt researcher, was unpaid for one day a week; Therese Raymond, Syria researcher, was paid just over £20 per year in luncheon vouchers for two days a week; and Colin Leyland-Naylor was paid £52 and £52 in luncheon vouchers per year for his full time job as press cutter, compared to Bruce Laird, the highest paid member of the Investigation Department, who was paid £1000 per year, with £52 of luncheon vouchers and £104 National

[218] 'Staff Salaries as at April 1967', IEC doc. 40, IISG [No Ref].

Health Insurance contributions.[219] Despite having to work in poor conditions and with minimal resources, Amnesty's research on the Soviet Union in this period was described by a 1966 report as being 'adequate', alongside other states such as Portugal, Chile and South Africa.[220] This adequate level of research is clearly contextual and as the reputation and membership of Amnesty expanded, so too did the size and quality of its Research Department and, therefore, its subsequent output.

By the end of the 1960s, there was a clear need for Amnesty to develop its research department. In the early 1970s, this department went through a development process, strengthening various aspects of its research capabilities. A core of full time paid researchers were appointed under the leadership of Zbynek Zeman, who become the newly created Head of Research in July 1970.[221] These researchers were recruited 'on the strength of their academic and linguistic qualifications and of their ability to be flexible and deal with new situations as they arise in their particular regions'.[222] The requirements for these new researchers suggests a desire for a compromise between flexibility and expertise, something that was much needed given the style of Amnesty's work. It is also revealing of where Amnesty placed its priorities regarding its research. The desire to recruit academics rather than media or marketing experts, shows that Amnesty held high regard for the quality of its research, rather than its ability to work with the media. This academic approach was essential in Amnesty's development of a reputation of expertise on human rights violation in the Soviet Union, a reputation that came to dominate how its work in this area was received by the wider public, as can be seen in the response to its publication of the *Chronicle*

The procedure for developing the Research Department in the 1970s was clearly set out in an IEC report from November 1970. This document noted a desire to have a minimum permanent core of eight researchers, each with a secretary, who were to be supplemented with

[219] 'Staff Salaries as at April 1967', IEC doc. 40, IISG [No Ref].
[220] 'Investigation Department report March, 1966', IEC no. 38, IISG [No Ref].
[221] 'Amnesty International 1961-1971, Amnesty Research', exact date unknown, probably late 1971/early 1972, ICM no. 11, IISG [No Ref].
[222] Ibid.

additional researchers in the following years.[223] This 'minimum core' was described as being central to the organisation and 'without which it would be impossible to carry out the work of the department.[224] This minimum core included researchers on Europe, Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and three administrative positions comprising a librarian, a special projects researcher and a director of research. This report to the IEC also described the proposed development of the Research Department in four main stages over five years. Stage one of this development included a proposal for an assistant researcher on Eastern Europe, suggesting both the need for Amnesty to have a more dedicated researcher on this area. Given that these proposed developments were noted to give 'the present organisation a better service' rather than expand the organisation as a whole, the desire to have a specific position on Eastern Europe gives a sense of the importance Amnesty placed upon research into this area.[225]

The November 1970 report to the IEC reiterates the type of person the Research Department sought to recruit, and is indicative of the personal traits that were essential to Amnesty researchers in this period. Good linguists and persons with high academic qualifications were noted as being essential to the organisation, as was flexibility, which given the state of Amnesty in the early 1970s was perhaps the most important trait a researcher could possess.[226] This desire for flexibility is important to note, as it appears in hindsight to have been essential to those working on the Soviet Union for Amnesty, and in some sense dominated the way in which the organisation's research on this area was conducted.

Despite the size and scale of human rights violation in the USSR, there were only two or three individuals working on the Soviet Union at any one time in the 1970s and early 1980s. Of these, only one was a dedicated researcher, supported by executive assistants or secretaries. However, given the nature of Amnesty at this time, this 'dedicated' researcher often held other responsibilities, either for research on other nations or for the running of the organisation.

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[223] 'The Present State and Future Development of the Research Department', 28-29 November, 1970, IEC no. 50, IISG [No Ref].
[224] The Present State and Future Development of the Research Department', November, 1970.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.

Amnesty's research on the Soviet Union can be divided into two periods based on the leading Soviet researcher. From its inception to the mid 1980s, Amnesty had two chief researchers on the Soviet Union, Bruce Laird and Clayton Yeo.

Bruce Laird was the key researcher on the USSR in Amnesty's early years, although it is unclear from archival material when he began this work. This is perhaps due in part to the undeveloped and amateur nature of Amnesty's research department in the 1960s before the professionalisation under Zeman. Laird's work with Amnesty appears to illustrate the group's professed need for flexible individuals within the organisation. A staff salary list from 1967 shows that together with his work on the Soviet Union, Laird also had responsibility for Amnesty's research on East and West Germany, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Switzerland.[227] Although he was assisted by Hilary Sternberg, a part-time paid worker who worked on Russia who had translated several important pieces of *samizdat* literature, and Christel Marsh, who assisted him on Eastern Europe, the diversity of Laird's research areas illustrate how thinly spread research on some of these nations was.[228] It would have been impossible for any individual, no matter how talented, to keep fully up to date with human rights violations that occurred under such a breadth of languages, cultures and regimes.

Laird held an important role in the wider Investigation Department before its professionalisation under Zeman. Not only did he have responsibilities for research in an array of European nations, but he was also involved in a variety of differing areas of Amnesty's hierarchy, including its European working party.[229] The importance of his work in these areas was clearly recognised, given that his salary was the highest in the Investigation Department, and the same as

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[227] 'Staff Salaries as at April 1967', IEC doc. 40, IISG [No Ref].

[228] 'The Present State and Future Development of the Research Department, Appendix A The Present Establishment', 28-29 November, 1970, IEC no. 50, IISG [No Ref]; 'An outline of the staffing and work of the London Office', April 1971, IEC no. 52, IISG[No Ref]. Hilary Sternberg was also involved in the translation of several prominent dissident works into English, including P. Litvinov, *The Trial of the Four: The Case of Galanskov, Ginzburg, Dobrovolsky and Lashkova* (New York, 1972), Z. Medvedev, *Ten Years After Ivan Denisovich* (London, 1973), and A. Solzhenitsyn, *Letter to Soviet Leaders* (London, 1974). Sternberg's involvement in the publication of *Letters to Soviet Leaders* is discussed in M. Scammell, 'The Long View', *Index on Censorship*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1973), pp. 26-27.

[229] 'International Council and Assembly Meeting 1971, Working Parties', September 1971, ICM doc. 11, IISG [No Ref].

that of Stella Joyce, who was then Head of Department.[230] Despite its importance, Laird's position illustrates neatly the manner in which Amnesty's Investigation Department operated before the professionalisation under Zeman. The wide ranging requirements of Laird's position suggests that Amnesty's research was still very much in an amateurish position, with researchers thinly spread across nations. This is perhaps further indicative of Amnesty itself in this period – an newly formed organisation reliant on the work of key individuals. That Laird covered such an array of nations might go some way to suggest why Amnesty's output on the Soviet Union in the 1960s was limited. Although there were clear cases of human rights violation which had caught the attention of the international media, such as the case of Yevgeny Belov in 1965, Amnesty did not have sufficient personnel or resources in this period to translate these cases into wide campaigns as they did in later years.[231]

Laird left the Research Department during the early 1970s, at a date unspecified in Amnesty archival material. It is clear, however, that there was a period of nearly two years from January 1973 to September 1974 where there was no dedicated Amnesty researcher for the Soviet Union.[232] Considering that Amnesty was keenly involved in supporting Soviet dissenters in this period, including the reproduction of dissident materials such as the *Chronicle*, the lack of a designated Soviet researcher is a surprising omission. Especially so given not only the scale of human rights violation in the Soviet Union, but also the amount of information that was getting to Amnesty about these abuses. During this period, Jane Ward appears to have continued Amnesty's research on the Soviet Union, and was supported by Hilary Sternberg and George Steiner, both of whom were part time researchers, and Julia Kemp, the Eastern Europe secretary.[233] Despite the amount of researchers given to this area, personnel was clearly spread thinly with Ward having to focus on the Soviet Union alongside her work on Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.[234] Only in

[230] 'Staff Salaries as at April 1967', IEC doc. 40, IISG [No Ref].
[231] For details of Belov's case see Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 353.
[232] 'Staff list as at 1st January 1973', IEC doc. 62, IISG [ORG 61/IEC 73]; 'International Secretariat – Staff at 21.6.73', IEC doc. 68, IISG [No Ref]; 'Research Department staff list', August 1973, IEC doc. 70, IISG [FIN03/IEC73].
[233] 'Staff list as at 1st January 1973', IEC doc. 62, IISG [ORG 61/IEC 73].
[234] Letter from Zbynek Zeman to Eric Baker, 19 January 1973, IEC doc. 62, IISG [No Ref].

September 1973 was it noted in IEC minutes that a new researcher on Eastern Europe was a priority, and that Jane Ward should be allowed to focus solely on the Soviet Union. Amnesty's decision not to have a designated Soviet researcher in this period is even more surprising given the missions and actions that it was approving at the time regarding the Soviet Union.[235]

Not having a specific Soviet researcher in this post was of clear concern to the research department, with a report on this vacancy being discussed at the September meeting of the IEC. This report noted the strain this vacancy was having, stating that whilst 'every other area in the Research Department has expanded, the East European research staff has decreased, without any corresponding decrease in the work load'.[236] This report noted that the one full time researcher in the East European section had to cover the USSR, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania.[237] Alongside two part time researchers, one of whom was a volunteer, an executive assistant and a secretary, this department dealt with information regarding 350 cases. Somewhat inevitably, this report noted that the standard of work on these reports was 'inadequate' and that the appointment of an additional researcher for this area was a 'matter of great urgency'.[238]

This position was filled when Clayton Yeo was appointed as Amnesty's USSR researcher in September 1974, initially on a part time basis until January 1975 when he became a full time researcher. Like Laird, Yeo's research on the Soviet Union coincided with other positions he held within the Research Department. He eventually held positions as the Head of Europe and the Deputy Head of Research, alongside which he played a leading role in Amnesty's policy decisions, representing the International Secretariat at an array of international events.[239] Yeo's involvement in these areas, much like Laird's earlier involvement in many different European countries, arguably restricted his ability to commit to his research on the USSR. In Yeo's case, this was

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[235] 'Research Department Priorities', September 1973, IEC doc. 71. IISG [No Ref] For examples of Amnesty's actions regarding the Soviet Union in this period see 'IEC meeting minutes – European Missions', January 1973, IEC doc. 62, IISG [No Ref]; 'IEC Draft Agenda', 23 August 1973; IEC doc. 71, IISG [No Ref]; and 'Mission Status', June 1973, IEC doc. 68, IISG [No Ref].

[236] 'East European Research Post', September 1973, IEC doc. 71, IISG [ORG63/IEC73].

[237] Ibid.

[238] Ibid.

[239] For an example of this, see 'Minutes of the Medical Advisory Board Meeting, 26-27 January 1980, London', Amnesty IEC no. 159, IISG [ORG44/IEC01/80].

something that contributed to his later decision to step down as Head of Europe in May 1977 to focus on his work on the Soviet Union.[240]

By the early 1980s, Yeo once again had to step down from an administrative position, and informed the International Secretariat in July 1980 that he could not conduct research on the USSR alongside his position as Deputy Head of Research, instead this time choosing to focus his efforts on the later. This decision left Amnesty with only a part time USSR researcher, Bohdan Nahaylo, alongside an executive assistant Marjorie Farquharson and a secretary Karin Owen.[241] When the scale of human rights violation occurring in the Soviet Union in this period, and Amnesty's previous high level of research into this area is taken into account, this lack of staff is very surprising and something that undoubtedly restricted further activism in this area.

The day to day working of Amnesty's USSR researchers in the 1970s was clearly busy. A report by Yeo to the IEC subcommittee on research planning and priorities from August 1979 outlines the vast amount of work that he, the USSR researcher, his Secretary and an Executive Assistant had to complete. This included:

- Writing about 100 case sheets a year
- Servicing about 600 adoption groups or more and about 20 coordination groups
- Producing very many external papers (probably about 75 in the past three years)
- Preparing second edition USSR report
- Preparing material for USSR campaign (forthcoming)
- Producing an average of five new releases per year
- Producing Urgent Actions (about 20 so far in 1979)
- Preparing "special actions" for membership in a scheme developed in USSR research department (nine so far in 1979)
- Supplying articles for most issues of AI newsletter
- Initiating and preparing action materials which are not on the Action Calendar and which may not involve National Section participation
- Preparing material (in Death Penalty report) and guidelines for USSR Death penalty campaign
- Writing USSR Annual Report entries[242]

[240] 'IEC private session report to Heads of Region', 1 May 1977, IEC doc. 117, IISG [ORG61/IEC77].
[241] 'Planning and Priorities – Europe 1981', July 1980 Amnesty IEC no. 163, IISG [EUR 01/IEC01/80].
[242] 'Report to IEC subcommittee on Research Planning and Priorities', August 1979, Amnesty IEC no. 151, IISG [EUR01/IEC02/79].

This list of activities was noted to 'only cover highlights', and omitted the 'routine work' of these researchers which included responding to numerous letters, telephone calls, and internal matters that dealt with the USSR.[243] Alongside this clerical activity these researchers were also involved in the translation of thousands of pages of *samizdat* a year, an extremely time consuming activity.[244] Yeo's report to the IEC stated that these commitments took up the vast majority of his time, and left only 15% of his working time to 'actually doing research'.[245] Indeed, Yeo's report clearly illustrates the pressure and frustration that he and his colleagues experienced due to the sheer scale of work involved in their research. He noted that:

> everything we do (every adoption, campaign, external paper etc.,) creates additional work subsequently (queries, follow-up action, servicing the action potential engendered)...Even for an experienced researcher who wrote the first edition of the USSR Report to write the second edition requires about four months of full-time and over-time.[246]

The overworked USSR researchers depicted in Yeo's report to the IEC sit in stark contrast to Amnesty's output on the USSR, which was well researched and of the highest quality. The second edition of the *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR report* that Yeo referred to was one of the main documents that Amnesty created on the USSR. As discussed above, this report played a major part both in Amnesty's efforts in publicising the human rights violation in the USSR and in its wider campaigns. It was arguably one of the most important reports produced by any organisation or individual in this period on Soviet human rights abuse. However, it could be suggested that given the pressure that Amnesty's USSR researchers were under, it is a report that might not have been produced. That it exists is perhaps a testament to the efforts of these individuals, who appear to have worked extremely long hours in order to produce their research. That such an important and influential document was produced in the context of such pressure and over work goes some way to illustrate the commitment of Amnesty's researchers on the

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[243] 'Report to IEC subcommittee on Research Planning and Priorities', August 1979, Yeo notes that they received 20 to 30 letters a day regarding the USSR.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid. This is probably a self reference as although anonymous, Yeo is likely to have been the author of the majority of these reports. Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 September 2011.

Soviet Union in this period, showing how important these individuals were for the organisation's output.

The concluding paragraph of Yeo's report to the IEC on the state of the USSR research clearly shows the frustration that he experienced in this period and is worth quoting in full.

[T]he USSR Research Department team is so burdened with current work ("routine") that it is very difficult to develop work better or do work as thoroughly as we should. Thus, research is the poor sister and gets done largely in overtime. We have never had any possibility to develop an aggressive system of research, for example by undertaking research missions and trying to penetrate into areas not covered by existing *samizdat* sources. Even the press cuttings we read cursorily unless they feed directly into action. Similarly, in servicing the groups, the researcher and E[xecutive] A[ssistant] scarcely have time to develop new techniques or go beyond established advice to groups and methods with them, although there is much we could do here. We feel that we are in a position of having to do too much of our work in half measures. **This, rather than the workload, creates considerable emotional drain in the team of staff.** [247]

As Yeo states in this extract, Amnesty's Soviet researchers were so burdened with their workload that they simply could not develop into new areas – something that should have arguably been their main priority. At the time this report was written, Amnesty was in the middle of a campaign on the Soviet abuses to coincide with the 1980 Moscow Olympics. There was clearly a desire to expand Amnesty's work on the Soviet Union at this time, something that was evidently restrained by the amount of pressure its Soviet researchers were under. Time spent on consolidation rather than development or conventional research harks back to the position the Research Department was in before its professionalisation under Zeman. In this sense, it can be noted that in some respects the development of Amnesty's Research Department could not keep up with its required and desired output. Just as before its professionalisation, the Research Department relied heavily on key individuals such as Yeo.

Yeo's final remark in this report is perhaps the most telling about the frustration he and his colleagues experienced. It highlights that working in 'half measures' was more emotionally draining than the long hours required. This highlights the personal involvement that these researchers had invested in their work, something that affected them emotionally when they could not develop their work further. This is perhaps tied to the subject matter of their research,

[247] 'Report to IEC subcommittee on Research Planning and Priorities', August 1979. All emphasis from original document, except final sentence highlighted by this author.

being held back from fully assisting dissidents and victims of Soviet abuses by clerical and logistical demands. This frustration in operating in 'half measures' is also telling of Amnesty's researchers on the Soviet Union, and especially of Yeo himself. Working long hours for an organisation such as Amnesty would suggest a personal and moral obligation to the prisoners of conscience these researchers were involved with. Whilst it perhaps seems a little obvious to note, it is clear that these researchers were not working at Amnesty primarily for the high wages or benefits such an organisation could offer. Amnesty's ethos of assisting the forgotten prisoners would clearly have affected those involved with its Research Department. Hopgood's discussion of Amnesty as a secular religion is particularly apt in this context, with this 'faith' arguably driving these researchers to work in adverse circumstances.

There were clear attempts to alleviate the pressure on Amnesty's Soviet researchers, with the IEC regularly discussing the need to appoint another researcher on the USSR or Eastern Europe. Indeed, research on the USSR and Eastern Europe was often considered the highest priority by members of the IEC. However, that these discussions occurred so regularly suggest that these researchers could not be appointed at a rate sufficient to keep on top of demand. Attempts to recruit an Eastern European researcher were particularly difficult, with an Eastern European researcher position advertised for over a year in 1973.[248] Given the amount of expertise on the Soviet bloc in London, where the Research Department was based in this period, at arguably the height of the Cold War, it is particularly surprising that Amnesty could not secure a researcher in this field.

In assessing the efforts of both Laird and Yeo, one gets a sense of highly capable researchers struggling against the position they found themselves in. Yeo's reports to the IEC in particular paint a picture of a department that struggled in vain to maintain its output, let alone develop into new areas and campaigns. This struggle is in stark contrast to the output of Amnesty on the Soviet Union, such as the *Chronicle* and *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* which were of

[248] 'East European Research Post', September 1973, IEC doc. 71, IISG [ORG63/IEC73].

the highest quality and often the most up-to-date reports available on the Soviet dissident movement.

The impact that Amnesty had on the British discourse on Soviet dissent cannot be underestimated. Its research department, although at times vastly overstretched, produced an array of publications on Soviet human rights violation that was unmatched by any other organisation in the West. Its translation of the *Chronicle of Current Events* provided the English speaking world with the most important primary material on position of dissenters in the Soviet Union. These documents not only formed the bulk of information utilised by journalists and commentators at the time, but have become a significant collection of documents for scholars to utilise to this day. The two editions of *Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR* offered local Amnesty groups the central position on individual prisoners of conscience, and would have been utilised by these activists in their work for dissidents. These reports are a neat way of illustrating how information from the research department spread out to the wider world, and how it was able to influence a vast number of individuals. Amnesty relied on its reputation for its work on the Soviet Union. Given the level of political intrigue and manipulation in the period of the Cold War, that Amnesty stood out and offered a moral position to a political problem is perhaps one of the many reasons that journalists and academics alike came to trust its output. Claims that the group was partial, including accusations that it was funded by the British intelligence services, the CIA and the KGB may have actually worked in the groups favour.[249] It clearly made every attempt in this period to illustrate its impartiality, something that perhaps put the group in unique territory in the Cold War. When this work is placed into the context of threats against its members, including the callous attacks on the members of its Moscow group, and the high workload of its stretched research department, both the quality and quantity of Amnesty's work on the Soviet Union becomes even more impressive.

[249] Buchanan, 'Amnesty International in Crisis, 1966-7'.

Chapter 2-

Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union

Especially zealous is the notorious "Amnesty International", whose unscrupulous methods we have already related to you in the pages of Izvestia...One of the reports of the British Section of this organization states that representatives of the intelligentsia in the Soviet Union are sent off to psychiatric hospitals "without any trial". Tales of "psychiatric isolation cells for healthy persons" are unfailingly accompanied by a hypocritical refrain from "martyrs", condemned, apparently, to spend the rest of their days behind impenetrable walls. In reality, we are dealing with persons who have committed socially dangerous actions while of unsound mind, or who have, during the course of the investigation, the trial, or after the sentence has been passed, become mentally ill, thus making it impossible for themselves to take account of their own actions or control them... The Western ideological saboteurs who babble all kinds of rubbish about mentally ill persons do not even notice what a ridiculous position they are putting themselves in...

K. Bryantsev, *Zealots of Falsehood in the Slough of Slander*[250]

Arise ye starvelings from your slumbers,
Arise ye psychic slaves of woe,
For reason in revolt now thunders
Against the psychiatric foe...

Valery Tarsis, *Ward 7*[251]

Alongside the general expertise of Amnesty regarding the position of Soviet prisoners of conscience, a collection of British groups became noted for their expertise on the Soviet authorities abuse of psychiatry. From the mid-1960s, the Soviet authorities used psychiatric treatment as a way to deal with political dissenters. By declaring that a dissident suffered from a psychiatric condition, the Soviet authorities could denounce any public statement previously made by that person as the work of a lunatic on the fringe of mental health. This was particularly useful for the Soviet authorities as not only did it offer the opportunity to denigrate dissidents who were gaining support, but it also allowed them to deflect attention away from their own problems which were being exposed by dissidents. In an article written for the British Journal of

[250] K. Bryantsev, 'Zealots of Falsehood in the Slough of Slander', *Izvestia*, 24 October 1971, quoted in Amnesty International, *AI in Quotes* (London, 1976) p. 20.
[251] V. Tarsis, *Ward 7: An Autobiographical Novel* (London, 1965) p. 25. Sung to the tune of the Internationale.

Psychiatry, Nanci Adler and Semyon Gluzman highlight how the Soviet authorities used this to their advantage, stating that:

> By claiming to 'treat' political adversaries in either 'special' or 'ordinary' psychiatric institutions, the failures of the political system were relocated from the institutions of State to the psyche of the individual so that the Soviet system could deny its own structural failings.[252]

In order to get around the legal formalities prescribed by the Soviet system, many dissidents were sent for psychiatric evaluation and declared unfit to stand trial due to diagnosis of mental illnesses and psychotic disorders. This allowed the Soviet authorities to imprison dissenters in psychiatric hospitals without the need for court cases or public legal proceedings. This was especially convenient for the KGB and other branches of the internal state security forces as it prevented the dissidents from using public legal proceedings for propaganda purposes. The rigidly bureaucratic nature of the Soviet Union meant that all dissidents had to be subjected to a series of legal procedures, including several court appearances. Dissidents in this period frequently utilised court appearances as a public rostrum with which to talk about their political beliefs to an audience and to criticise the actions of the Soviet government. For example, at his September 1967 court appearance, Vladimir Bukovsky used his final statement to criticise the legality of his trial, and to openly question the actions of the KGB in his arrest – something that would have been impossible to suggest publicly outside of the courtroom, and which greatly angered the presiding judge.[253]

These trials also served as an instance for dissidents to gather together, often in a public display of support for their imprisoned comrades. Although these trials were declared as 'public', the reality was that they were closed to all but members of the KGB and keen supporters of the state. Friends of dissidents on trial repeatedly tried to gain access to the courtroom for these hearings, but were regularly turned away by guards.[254] This in turn led to the public gathering of dissidents outside the courtrooms whilst cases that involved dissenters were in session. Bukovsky

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[252] N. Adler and S. Gluzman, 'Soviet Special Psychiatric Hospitals: Where the System was Criminal and the Inmates were Sane', *British Journal of* Psychiatry Vol. 163 (1993) p. 713.
[253] For details of this court appearance see P. Litvinov, *The Demonstration in Pushkin Square* (London, 1969) pp. 87-95.
[254] For an example of this see Sakharov, *Memoirs*, pp. 315-318.

neatly notes that these protestors were 'standing outside the closed doors of an open trial'.[255] Those dissidents who did manage to attend these 'open' trials were on the whole keen to spread information about the cases themselves which sometimes ended up with the publications of court transcripts in *samizdat*.[256] Public trials of dissidents gave the wider dissident community the chance to engage in a substantial propaganda exercise – something which was undoubtedly considered as a great threat to the Soviet authorities.

Instead of these public hearings, political opponents were declared mentally insane, and subjected to forced psychiatric assessment in a *psikhushka*, the slang term used by prisoners to describe a psychiatric hospital where these dissidents were imprisoned. Dissidents were regularly diagnosed as suffering from the dubious psychiatric condition sluggish schizophrenia, or other forms of persecution mania, and subsequently sectioned. The scientific validity of these diagnoses predominantly emanated from a group of psychiatrists based at the infamous Serbsky Institute in Moscow. The Serbsky Institute gained a reputation similar to that of Lefortovo Prison, an infamous KGB prison renowned for its use of torture against political dissidents. Soviet psychiatrists attached to the Serbsky, including Daniil Lunts, Georgiy Morozov and Andrey Snezhnevsky, were frequently accused of following KGB orders in their diagnosis of dissidents. Indeed it could be argued that the so-called 'Snezhnevsky school' of psychiatry based at the Serbsky Institute, which first described the symptoms of sluggish schizophrenia, invented the disorder to facilitate the incarceration of dissidents in psychiatric institutes. The vague nature of this disorder, with recognised symptoms that included 'extreme emotional instability', 'boundless belief in one's abilities' and 'apathy' suggest that patients could be made to fit the condition rather than the other way around – an argument that would fit the accusations of using psychiatric diagnosis for political means.[257] In an article published in the British Journal of Psychiatry in 1986, Professor Harold Merskey and Bronislava Shafran noted that the concept of

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[255] Bukovsky, *To Build A Castle*, p. 241.

[256] These *samizdat* court transcripts sometimes made their way to the West and were translated by activists before being put into publication. For an example of this see Litvinov, *The Trial of the Four*.

[257] H. Merskey and B. Shafran, 'Political Hazards in the Diagnosis of 'Sluggish Schizophrenia'', *British Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 148 (1986), pp. 249-251.

sluggish schizophrenia was 'virtually limited to the Soviet Union' and raised issues about the reliability of the empirical grounding of the illness.[258] Merskey and Shafran stated that if the Russian articles they had considered regarding sluggish schizophrenia 'had been submitted in English to a Western journal, most of them would probably have been returned for radical revision,' thus placing extreme doubt on the empirical basis of this condition, and subsequently the reputation of the psychiatrists who had diagnosed patients with it.[259]

By the mid-1980s, it was heavily suspected in the West that the KGB was involved in the psychiatric evaluations of dissidents, and that it was utilised as another form of punishment. In an article published in 1980s, the American magazine *Time* clearly saw the convenience that a diagnosis of sluggish schizophrenia gave the KGB another way to deal with dissidents. It noted that one of the key signs for spotting sluggish schizophrenia was an illustration of 'stubborn "reformist tendencies"', something that any political dissident would show undoubtedly in abundance, regardless of their state of mental health.[260] It is important to note that the Western concerns about the category of sluggish schizophrenia stemmed predominantly from the psychiatric community's concern at the medical validity of this condition. The fact that this condition was virtually limited to the Soviet Union suggests either that Soviet psychiatry had identified an illness that Western psychiatrists had failed to recognize, or that this condition had been invented to suit the demands of state security bureaus. The convenient nature of the symptoms of sluggish schizophrenia, and the concern at the empirical method of Soviet psychiatrists conducting research into this area suggests that the latter was true.

Whilst they underwent psychiatric assessment, dissidents were subjected to horrendous conditions and treatment. Repeated questioning of their mental state and their political position was carried out by psychiatrists, nurses and other non-medical staff, which led some dissidents to

[258] Merskey and Shafran, 'Political Hazards in the Diagnosis of 'Sluggish Schizophrenia', p. 247 and 251.
[259] Merskey and Shafran, 'Political Hazards in the Diagnosis of 'Sluggish Schizophrenia', p. 251.
[260] 'Behaviour: The Children of Pavlov', *Time*, 23 June 1980, available at http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,922041,00.html# (Accessed 7 September 2010).

query whether they were being treated by medical professionals or KGB investigators.[261] The dissident General Petro Grigorenko noted that he regularly saw Professor Daniil Lunts – a leading Soviet psychiatrist – 'coming to work in the uniform of a KGB general', and that other psychiatrists also wore this distinctive uniform.[262] Grigorenko's assertions, timed with the wider international concerns about the medical basis of sluggish schizophrenia suggest that the line between an investigator of the KGB and a psychiatrist was extremely blurred in the Soviet context.

Psychiatric evaluations were accompanied by forced treatment, often through a course of injections of the anti-psychotic drugs Sulfazin and Atropine, and periods of Insulin shock therapy[263], each of which had horrific effects on the patient. Nanci Adler and Semyon Gluzman have explained the detailed effects of each of these drugs in turn, noting that they caused intense muscle pain, exhaustion, toxic psychosis and permanent brain damage.[264] The effects of these chemical 'treatments' are also described in detail by those dissidents who had been incarcerated in *psikhushki*. Interestingly, the haunting descriptions of the 'treatments' tend to focus on the effect that psychiatric drugs had on others in the *psikhushka*, rather than their own experiences, suggesting that they were perhaps too vulgar to recollect. Leonid Plyushch, vividly described the effects that these drugs had on those around him:

I could see the effects of the potent sedative haloperidol[265] on my fellow inmates and wondered why drugs were administered in quarantine. The patients' illnesses had not been diagnosed yet, and contraindications had not been established. One inmate was writhing in convulsions, head twisted to the side and eyes bulging. Another patient was gasping for breath, and his tongue was lolling. A third was screaming for the nurse and begging for a corrective to alleviate the physical effects of haloperidol. The drug was given in such large doses in order to reveal the malingerers and to break any resistance.[266]

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[261] Plyushch, *History's Carnival*, pp. 275-297.
[262] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, p. 294.
[263] Insulin shock therapy was pioneered by Manfred Sakel in the 1930s, and effectively involves bringing patients in and out of hypoglycaemic comas. The historical background of this treatment, and the disturbing side effects are neatly described in K. Jones, 'Insulin Coma Therapy in Schizophrenia', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Vol. 93 (March, 2000), pp. 147-149.
[264] Adler and Gluzman, 'Soviet Special Psychiatric Hospitals: Where the System was Criminal and the Inmates were Sane', p. 715.
[265] Haloperidol is more commonly known in the West as Haldol, and is used in the treatment of schizophrenia, psychosis and delirium. For more information on the use of these treatments in Britain, see Royal College of Psychiatrists article on antipsychotics, available at http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfo/treatments/antipsychoticmedication.aspx (accessed 8 August 2012)
[266] Plyushch, *History's Carnival*, p. 305.

Plyushch's assertion that these 'treatments' were given both to those who had been consulted by psychiatrists and those who had yet to undergo diagnosis offers the strong suggestion that haloperidol, in this instance, was used to punish and suppress those in *psikhushki*, rather than to treat them. Bukovsky's claim that everyone's treatment in the *psikhushka* started with 'the agonising haloperidol in doses large enough to fell a horse' further shows the barbarity of the use of psychiatric drugs.[267] These powerful psychiatric drugs appear to have been administered as a matter of course to those interned in Soviet psychiatric institutions, suggesting that the Soviet authorities wanted dissidents to be 'treated' regardless of whether they needed treatment or how painful these treatments were.

What is perhaps most haunting about the use of anti-psychotic drugs was that in many cases their horrific side effects were both preventable and reversible. It must be noted that many of the psychiatric drugs used in Soviet psychiatric institutions were used by psychiatrists in the West, and are still used in British hospitals today. In conventional use of psychiatric tranquilizers – such as Trifluoperazine, Aminazin and Chlorpromazine – an array of anti-Parkinsonian drugs are used to combat the side effects experienced by those on tranquilizers which resemble those with Parkinson's disease. The painful side effects of these tranquilizers can also be reversed by stopping treatment for periods of time and simply allowing the side effects to wear off.[268] Failure to use either of these methods demonstrates that Soviet psychiatrists in this period were in one of two predicaments. Either Soviet psychiatry lagged so dramatically behind the position of psychiatric treatment in the West that they were unaware of the conventional way of treating the side effects of these drugs; or they knew about the preventable side effects of their 'treatments', and were using them as a deliberate political tool to torture and repress enemies of the state.

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[267] Bukovsky, *To Build A Castle*, p. 283.

[268] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, pp. 202-209. For current British NHS guidelines on the use of psychiatric drugs in the treatment of Schizophrenia see National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guideline 82 (March 2009) available at http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11786/43608/43608.pdf (Accessed 1 November 2010). These guidelines note the possible side effects of using anti-psychotic drugs, including akathisia (uncontrollable muscular movement or restlessness), weight gain, and 'unpleasant subjective experiences'.

In an article published in 1976, Professor Harold Merskey discussed the differences between what he termed 'bad psychiatry' and the political use and abuse of this medical treatment. Merskey noted three categories of psychiatric abuse. The first category described 'bad psychiatry', which was well-intentioned but importantly technically erroneous. In this context Merskey argued that psychiatrists should be absolved from any moral blame as it was their genuine intention to treat their patient, despite lacking technical ability. The second category involved neglect of psychiatric treatment, either through provision or lack of care. This category is not limited to psychiatrists, and includes politicians and aspects of the bureaucracy who might have prevented psychiatric treatment through their negligence. The final category is the most aggressive of the three and described the political use or compliance in the abuse of psychiatric treatment, either randomly or systematically.[269] That Plyushch refers to a patient who begged for a corrective suggests that the nurses and psychiatrists in the particular *psikhushka* knew what was occurring, and chose to either comply with the abuses from the psychiatrists or turn a blind eye to the demands of this patient. This suggests that the treatment of dissidents in psychiatric institutions was not a case of 'bad psychiatry', but something more sinister.

There were a vast array of psychiatrists in the Soviet Union who were neither among the 'Snezhnevsky school' or in the dissenting ranks. Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway, who wrote two detailed pieces on the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, identify 'average' psychiatrists as a group who, in their opinion, were either relatively ignorant towards the political abuse of psychiatry, or completely passive towards it. This group, they argue, regularly evaded involvement in cases that involved dissidents, and preferred to pass them on to others so as not to take personal risk for their case.[270] Furthermore, Bloch and Reddaway also contend that discussion of cases involving dissidents was virtually non-existent between psychiatrists through fear of being reported to the authorities for their opinions – risking not only their professional reputation but also their employment status.[271] Thus, even if Soviet psychiatrists knew of cases of abuse, it is

[269] H. Merskey, 'Abuses of Psychiatry in the USSR', *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 6., No. 1, (1976) p. 45.
[270] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, pp.230-234.
[271] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 232.

likely that many would have kept quiet in order to preserve their own position and standard of living. In this context, it is impossible to draw the conclusion that Soviet psychiatry as a whole was engaged in the abuse of dissidents. However, it is clear that a significantly powerful section of the profession was engaged actively in these abuses which meant that other psychiatrists had to follow their lead or risk their careers. The argument about the role of the average Soviet psychiatrist was to play a key role both in the international conflicts over psychiatric abuse, and in the response to psychiatric treatment in post-Soviet countries.[272]

It must be noted that *psikhushki* were fully functioning psychiatric institutions. Within these institutions were patients with genuine mental health conditions who were being treated by psychiatrists. There was no separation in wards between genuinely ill patients and dissenters held there against their will. Indeed, dissident memoirs of time spent in *psikhushki* often include references to sharing wards with patients whom the dissident in question felt was genuinely ill. For example, the dissident Zhores Medvedev noted that on his first night in the Kaluga Psychiatric Hospital he was placed in a ward with patients who suffered from depressive psychosis, psychopathy, and alcoholism.[273] Vladimir Bukovsky recalled two patients he met in *psikhushki*; one, who maintained virulent anti-American opinions who believed he had killed President Kennedy by pressing a bell which summoned the guards, and another man who held extremely paranoiac views that he would be eaten by another patient. In both of these cases, Bukovsky notes the insistent teasing and hostility towards these genuinely ill patients by sane dissenters in order to outline both their superiority and their sanity.[274] The fact that dissidents were kept alongside genuine patients inside *psikhushki* can be argued to have been in an attempt to drive the dissidents closer towards insanity. Even if this did not occur, the haunting and oppressive atmosphere created by being forced to share a ward with potentially violent patients with clear mental health problems can only have increased the pressure on dissidents to recant their views in exchange for release, and to break their mental strength.

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[272] For details of the response to psychiatry in the post-Soviet nations, see Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness*, pp. 135-264.
[273] Z. Medvedev and R. Medvedev, *A Question of Madness* (New York, 1971) p. 89-90.
[274] Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle*, p. 165-168.

The barbaric treatment of political prisoners led some to comment on the similarity of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union to the abuse of medical ethics in Nazi Germany. Anatoly Koryagin, a Soviet psychiatrist who became a dissident, stated in a lecture to the British Royal College of Psychiatrists Autumn quarterly meeting on 29 October 1987, after his exile from the Soviet Union, that 'there are doctors like [Joseph] Mengele in the Soviet Gulag today'.[275] Such an evocative comparison illustrates the barbarity of conducting 'treatment' in this manner, and suggests that like medical experimentation in Nazi Germany, the Soviet practice was unnecessarily cruel.

The use of madness to oppress political opposition has a precedent in Russian history. In 1836, Tsar Nicholas I declared the Russian philosopher Pyotr Chaadayev a 'lunatic' after he criticised the Tsar in a philosophical letter written to the Moscow journal *Telescope*. Chaadayev was detained in his home and his views were widely discredited by the Imperial court as those of a madman.[276] There have also been suggestions that contemporary Russian leaders have used psychiatry to suppress opposition. In *The New Cold War*, Edward Lucas has suggested that the psychiatric incarceration of political dissenters continues in contemporary Russia in a remarkably similar fashion to Soviet practices.[277] Although he recognises that these new accusations of abuse are 'not a carefully calibrated means of repression' as in the Soviet Union; it is still alarming that, in principle, 'everything is in place for a return to Soviet style punitive psychiatry'.[278] Reports in the British press of the detention of the journalist Larisa Arap in a psychiatric institution near Murmansk in 2007 show concern that this was linked to her articles that criticised of the quality of

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[275] A. Koryagin, 'The Involvement of Soviet Psychiatry in the Persecution of Dissenters', *British Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 154, (1989) p. 339. Joseph Mengele was a Nazi doctor infamous for his medical experiments on concentration camp prisoners.

[276] See Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, pp. 48-49; D. Shaw, S. Bloch and A. Vickers, 'Psychiatry and the State', *New Scientist*, 2 November, 1972, p. 258; G. Hosking, *Russian and the Russians, From Earliest Times to 2001* (London, 2001) pp. 274-275; and Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective*, p. 1.

[277] See E. Lucas, *The New Cold War: How the Kremlin Menaces both Russia and the West* (London, 2008) pp. 74-77.

[278] Lucas, *The New Cold War*, p.77.

mental healthcare for children in the region.[279] Whilst this case does not show that the current Russian administration is politically abusing psychiatric treatment, it does raise fears that Soviet-style practices are still continuing.

This systematic political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union was met with much protest from Western observers. The outrage at these abuses led to the complete alienation of Soviet psychiatrists from international psychiatry by the mid 1980s. Given the reputation of scientific excellence that had been built up by the Soviet Union in the course of the twentieth century, something that was a key part of the ideological conflict of the Cold War, this international isolation was extremely embarrassing. The All Union Society of Neuropathologists and Psychiatrists (AUSNP) were forced to resign from the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) on 31 January 1983, months before their expected expulsion at the organisation's World Congress in Vienna, after a period of pressure on them to explain their treatment of dissidents. The pressure placed on the AUSNP came mainly from national psychiatric organisations such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the American Psychiatric Association. However, it is clear that the efforts and rhetoric of these organisations were driven by human rights groups, who not only informed the response of more renowned and prestigious bodies, but in some cases scripted it. The role of these human rights groups in this pressure has been largely underestimated to date, and is where the attention of this chapter will be directed.

There is a limited historiography regarding the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. Memoirs from dissidents who were incarcerated in *psikhushki* such as Vladimir Bukovsky, General Petro Grigorenko, Leonid Plyushch and Viktor Nekipelov form a substantial part of the literature regarding Soviet psychiatric abuses.[280] These memoir accounts offer personal viewpoints to the abuses that occurred in *psikhushki*, and give the historian an insight into how dissidents subjected to this torture dealt with the punishments. These accounts fall into the wider

[279] See A. Gee, 'Russian dissident 'forcibly detained in mental hospital'', *The Independent*, 30 July 2007, available at http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russian-dissident-forcibly-detained-in-mental-hospital-459539.html (Accessed 1 February 2011).

[280] Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle*; Nekipelov, *Institute of Fools*; Plyushch, *History's Carnival*; and Grigorenko, *Memoirs*.

historiographical source of dissident literature which has done so much to inform historians about the plight and position of Soviet dissenters.

The other major source for this area is the work produced by Western scholars and human rights activists, much of which was published whilst the psychiatric abuse in *psikhushki* was a contemporary problem. The most prominent of these pieces were the two monographs produced by Peter Reddaway, and Sidney Bloch, two activists heavily involved in British human rights groups campaigning against the Soviet psychiatric abuses.. Both *Russia's Political Hospitals* and *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse: The Shadow Over World Psychiatry* were ground breaking pieces, offering documentation on the scale of the abuse of psychiatric treatment in the Soviet Union.[281] The accounts of psychiatric abuse compiled by these two authors are arguably the most important pieces produced in the West, both due to their thoroughness and their impact. The detail with which both these works went into about the specific nature of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union was extraordinary and is testament to the knowledge and authority of both authors. These pieces still form the basis of the academic historiography of this form of abuse in the Soviet Union. Also, these pieces document some of the efforts of British based individuals who publicised the psychiatric abuses that occurred in the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note that not only are these two pieces the most important in the historiography on Soviet psychiatric abuse, but they also played a substantial role in influencing and informing human rights activists in the late 1970s and 1980s about the abuses that were taking place. The information presented in these two monographs was utilised by human rights groups as sources of information about the abuses in their own right. This means that these works are in the interesting position of being both primary and secondary material in the context of this piece, and therefore should be considered both for their historiographical importance and for the role the had on informing those who were active in human rights groups in this period.

[281] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals* [simultaneously published in the US under the title *Psychiatric Terror: How Soviet Psychiatry is Used to Suppress Dissent* (New York, 1977)]; and Bloch and Reddaway, *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse.*

David Cohen's *Soviet Psychiatry* was published in 1989 to accompany the Channel 4 short film *Dispatches: Gorbachev's Asylums*.[282] This piece carries similarities with the works produced by Bloch and Reddaway in the sense that it is an overview of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union. Although noticeably a much smaller piece than the two works by Bloch and Reddaway, the detail and ground covered by *Soviet Psychiatry* is impressive, and it must be noted that although it was written to accompany the Dispatches programme, this is not – as Cohen puts it – the 'book of the film'.[283] Cohen's work should be rightly considered as a key text in the historiography of Soviet psychiatric abuse, not only as a piece that revises some of the points made by Bloch and Reddaway, but as a work in its own right. It is an interesting piece to consider alongside Bloch and Reddaway's work mainly due to the international context in which Cohen places the Soviet abuses. Cohen's research prior to writing *Soviet Psychiatry* concerned psychiatric treatment in Japan, America, Egypt and India – something which allowed him to place Soviet practices into an international context.[284] This has the effect of noting that psychiatric abuse occurred elsewhere in the world, particularly the abuses in Japan, and that the Soviet example was an extreme version of abuses that are potentially epidemic to general psychiatric treatment. [285]

Alongside these contemporary accounts, the two recent accounts by Robert Van Voren, a human rights activist, into the Western responses to the psychiatric abuses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe show the current direction of the scholarship in this area looking at the international response to these abuses.[286] Van Voren's accounts are effectively autobiographical recollections of his personal involvement with the dissident movement, and his work with the International Association on the Political Use of Psychiatry (IAPUP) (now known as the Global

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[282] D. Cohen, *Soviet Psychiatry: Politics and Mental Health in the USSR Today* (London, 1989).
[283] Cohen, *Soviet Psychiatry,* p. 8.
[284] Cohen, *Soviet Psychiatry,* p. 7. See also D. Cohen, *Forgotten Millions: The Treatment of the Mentally Ill – A Global Perspective* (London, 1988). One of the interesting criticisms of *Forgotten Millions* is that whilst claiming to be 'the first major study to evaluate mental health care comparatively on a global scale', it does not contain any analysis of psychiatric treatment in the Soviet Union. In the context of the 1980s, and the controversy surrounding the 'expulsion' of the All Union Society of Neuropathologists and Psychiatrists (AUSNP) from the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) this omission is particularly striking, especially so given the bold claim to be international in scope. This issue was raised in D. Gould, 'People we'd rather not think about – Review of D. Cohen, Forgotten Millions', *New Scientist,* 23 June, 1988, p. 69.
[285] See Cohen, *Soviet Psychiatry,* p. 52-54.
[286] Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness;* and R. Van Voren, *Cold War In Psychiatry: Human Factors, Secret Actors* (New York, 2010).

Initiative on Psychiatry (GIP)) in responding to claims of abuse. In stark contrast to the works of Cohen, Bloch and Reddaway, these pieces deal heavily with the diplomatic developments and the international response to the Soviet psychiatric abuses. These accounts detail the work conducted with the WPA in responding to these claims of abuse, and how they were dealt with in the wider context of the Cold War. The two most recent works by Van Voren are notably different from the pieces by Cohen and Bloch and Reddaway due to the context in which they were written. Both of these pieces were written in the late 2000s, a significant amount of time after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. This naturally entails that these pieces are much more reflective in their approach, seeking to explore the reasons behind changes in an historical context rather then simply outlining the events as previous works had done. Whilst the benefit of hindsight might detract such an author into producing a piece that suggests the fight against psychiatric abuse was one that would be inevitably won, this does not occur in Van Voren's works. Indeed, approaching the Soviet political abuse of psychiatry with a sense of hindsight allows these abuses to be placed into an international context. Van Voren's approach is one that is most welcome, allowing historians to build up a picture not only of how a key human rights activist in the West perceived his response to these abuses, but that also outlines the activity of Western organisations in the context of the Cold War.

The works of Van Voren are developing an area of historiography that has been largely ignored to date. It is clear that there is much scope for scholarship on the Soviet political abuse of psychiatry, especially from scholars in the West. The scale of abuse in *psikhushki* deserves serious attention from scholars, and is an area ripe for original and detailed work. This research would not only prove to offer an interesting insight into the Soviet suppression of internal dissent, but would hopefully expose their barbarity and cast light on contemporary reports of similar abuses in Russia.

In the context of the Cold War, it is clear that the political abuse of psychiatry did not occur in a vacuum. The Soviet authorities were heavily influenced by reactions from the West, and the role of human rights activists around the world was clear in putting pressure on governments

and official bodies. The literature to date does not explicitly consider the role of these human rights groups, and the role they played in the Western response to these abuses.

Britain became the central point for groups and individuals protesting against the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. This was for a variety of reasons. Several prominent dissidents who had been incarcerated in *psikhushki* had settled in Britain after their emigration from the Soviet Union – most notably Vladimir Bukovsky, Viktor Fainberg and Zhores Medvedev. Alongside these dissidents were several psychiatrists who emigrated to Britain in this period, including Marina Voikhanskaya and Alexander Voloshanovich, both of whom went on to play roles in the British campaigns against the Soviet abuses.

The pressure from the Royal College of Psychiatrists was integral to the World Psychiatric Association's response to the Soviet abuses. This was not only because of the prominent position of the Royal College within the WPA and international psychiatry, but also because of the hard line stance that it took on the matter, something that will be discussed in much depth later in this chapter. It must be remembered that the Royal College of Psychiatrists is one of the most prestigious psychiatric bodies in the world, and that its position was very important for influencing other national psychiatric organisations. It is also important to note that a number of important figures who campaigned against the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union were based in Britain in this period. Bloch and Reddaway wrote their two works on Soviet psychiatric abuses whilst in Britain, something which kept the academic focus of Soviet psychiatric abuse on British shores.[287] As noted above, the work of these two academics was very important for offering academically credible information about the Soviet psychiatric abuses to the British public, and it is likely that these two individuals were influential in the formation and sustenance of some British groups formed in this period. Professor Harold Merskey and Dr Gery Low-Beer, two influential psychiatrists in the campaigns against psychiatric abuse, were also based in Britain in this period.

[287] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010.

A combination of these factors meant that Britain developed a strong academic and institutional position with regards to the psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union, gaining an international reputation for expertise in this area. This chapter will analyse the role of human rights groups in informing the British response to the Soviet abuse of psychiatry. In order to offer a sense of context, three cases of psychiatric abuse that were particularly noted in Britain will be discussed. The cases of General Petro Grigorenko, Zhores Medvedev and Vladimir Bukovsky illustrate the development of public awareness of the abuses from ephemeral interest in the late 1960s to a wider human rights concern in the 1980s. This chapter will then consider the British cultural exposure to Soviet psychiatric abuses, centring on the works of Tom Stoppard and Valery Tarsis, and the impact they had on wider society. Once this context has been established, the role of human rights groups will be analysed in detail. The campaigns of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry, the Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, and the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse will be assessed in detail. Finally, the role played by the Royal College in campaigning against psychiatric abuses will be considered, particularly the efforts of its Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry. The influence that human rights groups had on this committee, and subsequently the direction of the Royal College, will be highlighted, illustrating the impact that human rights groups had on the policy of official bodies.

Three Cases that caught the West's Eye

From the mid 1960s to the early 1980s there were three main cases of the psychiatric abuse of dissidents in the Soviet Union which caught the eye of Western organisations, individuals, and perhaps most importantly the media. In order to give a sense of context it is worth considering the cases of General Petro Grigorenko, Zhores Medvedev and Vladimir Bukovsky, and how the West responded to their particular plights. The cases of each of these dissidents had particular resonance in Britain, and are good illustrations of the impact that the response from British groups and individuals could have on the internal policy of the Soviet Union

towards dissidents. A comparison of these cases is also revealing of the developing awareness and concern about the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union from the British public.

Petro Grigorenko

The psychiatric incarceration of General Petro Grigorenko is one of the most high profile cases in which the Soviet authorities clamped down on a dissenting figure within their own ranks. Grigorenko was a high-ranking General in the Red Army, who served with great distinction in the Great Patriotic War.[288] Grigorenko's memoirs clearly document the dramatic rise in stature that he experienced in the course of his life time. Born into a working class family in Ukraine, he spent most of his life fanatically working towards communist ideals.[289] Grigorenko can be described as a devout communist, who found answers for the many questions that arose in his lifetime in the works of Lenin.[290] Despite this conviction, his public concern at the inability to question the direction of the Soviet authorities, and the fear of a new personality cult being formed under Nikita Khrushchev, led him to become an enemy of the Soviet authorities.[291] Grigorenko was incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital in August 1964, after being declared insane at a trial in which neither he, nor his wife could attend. He was represented by a lawyer, whom he described as being 'a KGB lackey'.[292] Grigorenko's case is a good example of how psychiatric incarceration avoided the complications of a public trial, and how it was used in order to imprison dissidents without any chance of retaliation. Given Grigorenko's previous public denunciations of the direction of the Soviet government, it is likely that he would have used the opportunity of a public trial to attack the corruption of the Soviet *nomenklatura*, rather than be submissive in the face of

[288] The Great Patriotic War was the Soviet, and later Russian, name for the Second World War. For an account of Grigorenko's activities in the Great Patriotic War see Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, pp. 122-200.
[289] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, p. x.
[290] Ibid, p. 265.
[291] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 106. For an account of the speech in which Grigorenko publicly voiced his concerns about the direction of the Soviet government under Khrushchev see Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, pp. 237-261.
[292] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, p. 293.

the court.[293] By denouncing Grigorenko as being medically unfit to stand trial – a decision which he had no say in – the Soviet authorities prevented this from occurring. After a period in psychiatric institutions and prisons, Grigorenko was released on 27 June, 1974, as a concession by the Soviet authorities before the visit of the US President Richard Nixon.[294] Grigorenko was eventually exiled by the Soviet authorities when, during a sanctioned visit to New York for medical treatment in November 1977, he was stripped of his Soviet citizenship.[295]

Grigorenko's case is important to consider for several reasons. Firstly, the high-profile nature of Grigorenko, and his esteemed background in the Soviet military clearly show the extent to which the Soviet authorities were prepared to use psychiatric incarceration to punish and control dissidents. It could be argued that the most effective way for the Soviet authorities to deal with Grigorenko was to declare him mentally insane. This is due not only to the strength of his position, but also to his background as an exemplary communist. Declaring his shift in viewpoint as being due to his insanity was an attempt to remove all credibility that he had, and to destroy his reputation among the Soviet public. Secondly, Grigorenko's case was one of the first examples of psychiatric abuse being used to persecute dissent that was publicised prominently in the West. His plight was first mentioned in a front page article in *The Times* on 10 January 1968. Although this report mentions nothing about his incarceration in a psychiatric institution, it does elude to his ideological dissent, noting that he had previously made an anti-Soviet speech in 1964.[296] An article in the same paper the following day mentions his psychiatric treatment, noting that he was refused attendance at a court case due to his time in hospital – despite having been issued a discharge certificate.[297] Although lacking distinct clarity, taken together these two articles suggest that Grigorenko's psychiatric treatment was linked to his dissenting opinions.

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[293] Nomenklatura – the name given to the elite of the Soviet hierarchy who enjoyed an array of privileges dependant on their position. Heavily criticised by many dissidents, most famously by Milovan Djilas. See M. Djilas, *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* (London, 1957).

[294] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, p. 429. For a good account of Grigorenko's imprisonment see Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, pp. 105-127.

[295] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, pp. 449-451.

[296] K. Tidmarsh, 'Ex-general in Moscow trial protest', *The Times*, 10 January, 1968 p. 1.

[297] K. Tidmarsh, 'Soviet court bars lawyer', *The Times*, 11 January, 1968 p. 5.

Whilst in prison and in psychiatric institutions, Grigorenko made detailed notes about his treatment. These accounts were smuggled out of prison and sent to the West by his wife.[298] They were subsequently made into the short documentary film, 'Grigorenko: The Man Who Wouldn't Keep Quiet', for Granada Television, which was produced and directed by Leslie Woodhouse.[299] This film was first shown on British television on 24 October 1970, and was a very important moment for the cultural recognition of Soviet psychiatric abuse in Britain. This documentary was based intently on Grigorenko's prison diaries, something which is keenly pointed out in the film itself. This was the first in a series of projects that Woodhouse engaged in, in which he tried to create documentaries on areas that issues of access made difficult. This entailed a reliance on factual evidence such as transcripts, tape recordings, witness accounts and, in the case of this documentary, diaries.[300] Woodhouse's documentary clearly depicts the barbarity of the incarceration of a sane man in a *psikhushka*. One scene showed an aggressive patient attacking visiting relatives and Grigorenko being awoken in the night by piercing screams. This documentary also visually recreates the psychiatric diagnosis of Grigorenko, with actors playing the role of Morozov and Lunts – two key psychiatrists accused of psychiatric abuse – giving a clear visual prompt to not only the conditions endured by those in *psikhushki*, but also the unfairness of the psychiatric diagnosis. This allowed viewers to visualise what the conditions were like in the Soviet psychiatric institutions, arguably an image more powerful and accessible than written accounts.

Aside from Woodhouse's documentary, the initial Western reception to the psychiatric incarceration of Grigorenko was negligible. It could be argued that his case was met with minimal support or interest from the West, aside from a cursory interest shown by people like Woodhouse in producing a documentary without the traditional access available. It took several years for the Grigorenko's plight to be fully recognised in the West, something that arguably occurred due to the later public knowledge of other dissidents who were punished in the same fashion.

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[298] Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, p. 391.
[299] L. Woodhouse, 'Grigorenko: The Man Who Wouldn't Keep Quiet', Granada Television, 1970. See programme details from the British Film Institute at http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/224877 (Accessed 25 October 2010). Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 120, footnote 31 detail on p. 471.
[300] Email to author from L. Woodhouse, 26 October, 2010.

Zhores Medvedev

In the first days following my return home I learned about the widespread reaction to my illegal hospitalisation. Thanks to the many protests by scientists both in the USSR and abroad, the use of psychiatry as a means of persecution had attracted the attention of foreign commentators and journalists. Newspapers and weeklies in England, the United States, France and other countries not only published the numerous protests about this violation of medical ethics in the USSR, but also described the actual events in Obninsk and Kaluga.

Zhores Medvedev, *A Question of Madness.*[301]

The incarceration of Zhores Medvedev in a psychiatric institution from May to June 1970 is unique for two reasons. Firstly, Medvedev was not placed into a typical *psikhushka*, but into an ordinary psychiatric hospital, one that resembled a hospital rather than a prison. This is important as it showed intent from the Soviet authorities to prove that Medvedev suffered from mental illness, rather than using a *psikhushka* as a form of prison. This was perhaps due to the public stature that he had among dissidents in the Soviet Union, who came out in force in his support. Secondly, Medvedev was quickly released from the psychiatric institution after protests on his behalf from prominent figures, both from within the USSR and abroad.[302] This international response is in stark contrast to the response to Grigorenko's case both in its scope and in its outcome. Medvedev's case is also of extreme use for historians due to the way in which it has been documented. In the period surrounding his forced psychiatric diagnosis, and in the immediate period after his release, Medvedev and his twin brother Roy compiled a set of their personal observations of the confinement. *A Question of Madness* is a detailed, and deeply personal account of the experience of how a dissident dealt with psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union, including details of the efforts of the wider dissident community in the Soviet Union working for Medvedev's release.[303] It is clear from the very beginning of this work the role that international support had in the Zhores' release. In an introductory note to the piece, Zhores neatly offered his

most profound gratitude to all those friends, acquaintances and strangers, at home and abroad, who by protesting in various ways against the inhumane use of medicine for political purposes,

[301] Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of Madness.*
[302] Merskey, 'Abuses of Psychiatry in the USSR', p. 46.
[303] Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of Madness.*

created a climate of opinion which meant freedom for him and hope for others illegally confined in psychiatric hospitals.[304]

Medvedev was placed in a psychiatric hospital in direct response for the *samizdat* that he had produced, which included a book attacking the Soviet genetic policies under Stalin, particularly the geneticist Trofim Lysenko.[305] The interest in Medvedev's publications from psychiatrists during his diagnosis, as recollected in *A Question of Madness*, echoed Grigorenko's confusion as to whether those who diagnosed him were psychiatrists or KGB investigators.[306] Whilst incarcerated, there were a plethora of calls for Medvedev's release from an array of figures in the Soviet Union, including Andrei Sakharov, the novelist Veniamin Kaverin, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.[307] At an international symposium at the Institute of Genetics on 30 May 1970, Sakharov boldly asked for signatories for an appeal on behalf of Medvedev, something that was criticised by the head of the Institute Nikolai Dubinin.[308] Solzhenitsyn's appeal for Medvedev's release was also notably powerful, linking his case to that of Pyotr Chaadayev and claiming his treatment as being a 'variation on the *gas chambers*' – a clear reference to the Holocaust and the Nazi genocide.[309] This reference is particularly evocative due to its historical references, subtly arguing that the Soviet regime was no better than the Tsarist regime it had replaced or the Fascist system it had destroyed at the end of the Second World War.

The support that Medvedev received from dissidents within the Soviet Union is in stark contrast to Grigorenko's case. Medvedev's initial diagnosis was met with public statements by dissenters, compared to the seeming apathy towards Grigorenko's case. This is perhaps in part due to the awakening of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union, which became notably more active in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The public support from dissidents for Medvedev was also perhaps in part due to his position as a dissenting scientist. His denunciation of Lysenko was largely supported by Soviet scientists, something that may have impacted on support for him

[304] Ibid, p. ix.
[305] See Z. Medvedev, *The Rise and Fall of T. D. Lysenko* (Columbia, 1969).
[306] Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of Madness*, pp. 96-97.
[307] Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of* Madness, pp. 115-117, 130, 134-137.
[308] Sakharov, *Memoirs*, pp. 310-312.
[309] For the text of Solzhenitsyn's appeal see Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of Madness*, pp. 135-137.

from scientists such as Sakharov. Also, in comparison to Grigorenko it is clear that Medvedev held many more links and relationships with fellow dissenters in the Soviet Union. The work of his brother Roy in galvanising this support should also not be forgotten. It could be suggested that this array of support from dissenters also expedited the publication of material in the West on this abuse of psychiatry. This dissident support was notably missing from Grigorenko's case, and goes someway to explain why Medvedev's plight was more widely reported in the West. Whilst Leslie Woodhouse noted that his documentary on Grigorenko was challenging to produce due to a lack of access to material, there was a vast amount of material available on Medvedev's plight, due in part to the production and distribution of material by dissidents.

Despite not covering the initial stages of his psychiatric evaluations, the British media regularly reported on Medvedev's case.[310] Zhores recalled that after his release, his friends had compiled a sizeable collection of newspaper clippings from around the world that reported his case.[311] The international response for Medvedev's release was much more restrained in comparison to later campaigns for other dissidents, and consisted mainly of reports of this case. This was perhaps due to the sheer timescale involved – Medvedev was released comparatively quickly, perhaps too quickly for an international campaign to gather momentum. However, in comparison to the case of Grigorenko, the response to Medvedev's incarceration clearly shows that international opinion had become increasingly aware of these abuses.

Medvedev's case is important in the British context as it publicly suggested that psychiatry was used in the Soviet Union to control political dissenters. The fact that Medvedev was released so quickly after pressure was placed on the Soviet authorities is also of much significance. This case demonstrated to the West that sustained pressure on behalf of a particular dissident could have a dramatic impact on the Soviet internal policy towards them. This is something that arguably shaped the later work of human rights activists who operated on the

[310] For examples see J. F. Clarity, 'New Inquisition on Soviet Biologist', *The Times*, 5 June 1970, p. 7; 'No release for Soviet geneticist', *The Times*, 6 June 1970, p. 4; and 'Detained Soviet biologist freed', *The Times*, 18 June 1970, p. 7.
[311] Medvedev and Medvedev, *A Question of Madness*, pp. 169-171.

basis that international pressure could change the domestic policy of the Soviet Union. Medvedev's case shaped the way in which human rights groups targeted the Soviet authorities throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and gave them the knowledge that their pressure could eventually force the Soviet authorities into loosening their grip on particular dissenters.

A Question of Madness, the Medvedev brothers account of Zhores' incarceration gave a very useful source on the personal reactions to the forced psychiatric evaluations, and provided emotive material for contemporaries concerned with human rights abuses in the Soviet Union. This piece may have encouraged some to involve themselves in groups who campaigned against psychiatric, and wider human rights abuses in the Soviet Union, and may have informed their campaigns to an extent. Importantly, it was first published in 1971, five years before the Soviet Union publicly admitted to holding political prisoners with the exchange of Vladimir Bukovsky. In this light, this piece can be seen as playing another important step in building public consciousness regarding Soviet human rights abuses, and perhaps laid the ground for the work of later human rights organisations. Perhaps most importantly, the response to Medvedev's case shows a clear shift in both the way in which the Soviet authorities dealt with dissidents, but also in the Western knowledge of the abuses, and how they could influence them.

Vladimir Bukovsky

There was one last resort – Western psychiatrists. This seemed to offer little hope. What chance was there of breaking through all those ideological encrustations, prejudices and doctrines? I had little faith in its success, but none the less I sent the documentations to Western psychiatrists...At all events it was worth a try. Perhaps there were more honest people in the world than I thought?

Vladimir Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle.*[312]

Vladimir Bukovsky is a man of firsts with regards to the British response to the Soviet dissident movement. His high-profile exchange for the imprisoned Chilean Communist Luis Corvalan in December 1976 was a deeply symbolic event in the course of the Cold War. This well documented exchange, which resembled the swapping of covert agents between the two sides of the Iron Curtain, was the first admission by the Soviet authorities that it held political prisoners,

[312] Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle,* p. 289.

something that it had strenuously denied before this event, and made the front pages of British newspapers.[313] This was a key event in the construction of the Soviet dissenter in British discourse, and gave a public face to what had previously been abstract names and references. Bukovsky's exile to the West was not only an admission that the Soviet authorities held political prisoners, but also a sign that it was willing to utilise them for their own political motives, using them as tokens to trade for their comrades abroad.

Bukovsky's life and activism has been wide and varied, and an attempt to cover the scope of his life is simply beyond the remit of this piece. He has been involved in fighting human rights causes along a multitude of different lines, and has continued unabated in his activism since he settled in the Britain in the late 1970s. His unsuccessful attempt to run for President of the Russian Federation in 2008, an appearance on the Russian television documentary 'Они выбрали свободу'(They chose freedom), protests against the British Television License, and his political affiliation to the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) have kept Bukovsky in the public light in both Britain and Russia.[314] Bukovsky's political campaigning has meant that there are a plethora of interviews, videos and articles that refer to his work and life available on the internet and in academic pieces. Philip Boobbyer's recent article 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism' discusses Bukovsky's life, offers an insight into aspects of his political thought, and is the first to analyse the intellectual basis for his actions and activities.[315] Bukovsky's memoir *To Build A Castle* also lays out his dissident work whilst in the Soviet Union and should rightly be considered as a key historiographical piece in researching the Soviet dissident movement, and as a literary piece in its own right.[316]

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[313] D. Watts, 'Bukovsky exchange for Chilean Communist', *The Times*, 18 November 1976, p. 1.
[314] For example, see M. Franchetti, 'Russia is returning to Soviet-era repression, says dissident Bukovsky', *The Times*, 7 October 2007, available online at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article2604593.ece [Accessed 2 November 2010]; M. Hall, 'Anti-BBC political activist fined over TV license', *Get Surrey*, 8 June 2010, available online at http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/s/2072348_antibbc_political_activist_fined_over_tv_licence [Accessed 2 November 2010]; 'TV License Refuseniks', online at http://www.bbcrefuseniks.co.uk/index.html [Accessed 2 November 2010] and Они выбрали свободу (They Chose Freedom), available online at http://www.newsru.com/russia/01dec2005/film.html [Accessed 30 October 2010].
[315] Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism'.
[316] Bukovsky, *To Build A Castle*.

In short, Bukovsky can be best described as a life long non-conformist. He first showed dissenting feelings as a child, when he resigned from the Pioneers and refused to join the Soviet youth organisation the Komsomol. From these early foundations, Bukovsky went on to become involved with the Mayakovsky Square poetry readings in the late 1950s, and was eventually incarcerated in a *psikhushka* in May 1963 for possession of a copy of Milovan Djilas's *The New Class*.[317] Bukovsky was subsequently released in 1965, and maintained his dissident activity. He was arrested and sentenced to jail terms for his actions in 1967 and 1972, and used the occasion of his public trial as a rostrum with which to criticise the Soviet actions.[318] Bukovsky's activism did not stop during his incarceration. In 1974, with the imprisoned psychiatrist Semyon Gluzman, he co-authored the *samizdat* piece 'A Manual on Psychiatry for Dissenters', a guide to surviving incarceration in a *psikhushka* without being mentally broken by the officers of the KGB which was based largely on his own experiences.[319]

In early 1971, Bukovsky sent a collection of medical documents he had acquired regarding the political abuse of psychiatry to the West, which became the most comprehensive information regarding Soviet psychiatric abuse available at the time. Among these 150 pages of documents were medical files, and pieces that outlined the psychiatric diagnosis of six dissidents.[320] In a letter attached to these documents, Bukovsky appealed to psychiatrists in the West to study these documents and express their opinions on them; asking specifically if these documents contained enough scientifically-based material to diagnose mental illness and, on this basis, whether these people needed to be isolated from society.[321] Bukovsky also asked psychiatrists to place the issue of the Soviet abuses, and the outcome of these documents, on the agenda of the next International Congress of Psychiatrists. Reflecting on these documents, Bukovsky claims that he

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[317] Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism', pp. 453-456.
[318] See Litvinov, *The Demonstration in Pushkin Square*, pp.47-102 for an account of Bukovsky's 1967 trial.
[319] Available in an English translation in Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, Appendix VI, pp. 419-440.
[320] These were the cases of Vladimir Borisov, Viktor Fainberg, Natalya Gorbanevskaya, General Petro Grigorenko, Viktor Kuznetsov, and Ivan Yakhimovich. For an interesting discussion of the Bukovsky papers see S. Shafar, 'The disease of dissent', *New Psychiatry*, 17 July 1975, pp. 12-13.
[321] For a copy of Bukovsky's letter see Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals* (London, 1971) Appendix I.

held little hope of there being a response to these materials. He notes that these documents were sent abroad as a final attempt to publicise these cases of abuse, claiming there was little else he could do.[322]

The so-called Bukovsky papers have been described as the most persuasive body of evidence regarding the Soviet psychiatric abuses in the early 1970s.[323] Although the authenticity of these documents was originally questioned, Peter Reddaway later stated that Bukovsky was an 'impeccable source' and that his integrity was beyond reproach. This claim was built on Reddaway's experiences of dealing with an array of *samizdat* material from the Soviet Union; but it also worth noting that no psychiatrist mentioned in the Bukovsky papers refuted their claims, suggesting that they were accurate.[324] This led to these materials gaining a reputation of reliability, something that was of utmost importance in the context of the Cold War.

The Bukovsky papers were first released to the Western press in March 1971 by The International Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, a small French human rights organisation.[325] These documents were translated into English by the newly formed Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, an important British organisation of whom more will be said later in this piece. This group translated Bukovsky's appeal to the West, and had it reprinted in *The Times*, *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, and in its own pamphlet entitled 'The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals'.[326] On 16 September 1971, a group of psychiatrists wrote a letter to *The Times* in response to this appeal, noting Bukovsky's courage in sending these documents abroad, and called for their international colleagues to consider these documents and to discuss the matter with their Soviet colleagues.[327] The timing of Bukovsky's appeal proved to be excellent in this respect, as the world congress of the WPA was

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[322] Interview with Vladimir Bukovsky, 18 January 2011.
[323] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 79.
[324] Ibid, pp. 79-80.
[325] M. Moran, 'Former Soviet Dissidents Believed APA Pressure Forced Change', *Psychiatric News*, Vol. 45, No. 22 (November 2010), p. 11; Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism', p. 458.
[326] See P. Reddaway and V. Bukovsky, 'Plea to West on Soviet 'mad-house' jails', *The Times*, 12 March 1971, p. 8; D. Richter, 'Political Dissenters in Mental Hospitals', *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, No. 119, (1971) pp. 225-226; and C. Mee, *The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals* (London, 1971).
[327] F. Jenner et. al., 'Dissenters in Soviet mental hospitals', *The Times*, 16 September 1971.

held in Mexico City in November 1971. Bloch and Reddaway note that due to the dissemination of materials at and before this meeting, including translations of the Bukovsky papers and the recently published *A Question of Madness* by the Medvedev brothers, the 'stage was set' for discussion of the political abuse of psychiatry at this congress.[328] Indeed, one gets the impression that action from the WPA against the abuses was expected by many at this congress. This, however, did not occur. The WPA failed to take up the issue of the political abuse of psychiatry in the way expected by human rights activists. Although Dr Ramos de la Fuente, the President of the congress, noted in his inaugural speech that to keep silent about these abuses would 'weigh heavily on our consciences', no specific mention was made of individual cases or countries.[329] Bloch and Reddaway's account of this event in *Russia's Political Hospitals* analyses the WPA's approach in detail in the context of its institutional purpose. This account conveys a sense of frustration at the WPA's inaction, pointing to the somewhat unwieldy composition of the organisation.[330] The approach of the WPA to this issue was conceivably due to the desire to maintain cordial relations with psychiatrists in the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc nations. The WPA may have preferred at this stage to bring together the international psychiatric community, rather than dividing it through allegations of abuse. It must also be noted that little information emanated from the Soviet Union regarding psychiatric abuse other than these documents and dissident material. One can sympathise with the WPA taking a cautious approach to dealing with these allegations. Had these documents later been proven to have been forgeries created by an anti-Soviet group, the world psychiatric community would have divided, and the position of the WPA would have been significantly undermined. Indeed, the stern response from the WPA to these abuses in later years occurred after more evidence had been collated, and several victims of psychiatric abuse had emigrated to the West. As with all organisations that dealt with the dissidents in the Soviet Union, a reliance on factual information was a safe way to deal with reports of abuse without placing an institution's reputation on the line.

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[328] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 86.
[329] Ibid, p. 87.
[330] Ibid, pp. 86-92.

Bukovsky's efforts in sending these documents to the West was met with much support by British psychiatrists. In response to his sentence of 12 years in the Soviet penal system, an array of psychiatrists wrote to *The Times* in March 1972 offering their full support, noting it was 'both wrong and unnecessary to lock up such a person'.[331] Interestingly, among those who signed this letter of support were Sidney Bloch and Peter Sainsbury, two psychiatrists who were to play a large part in the British campaign against the Soviet psychiatric abuses in the 1970s and 1980s.

The receipt of the Bukovsky papers in Britain led to the formation of the Working Group, who went on to play an important role in the campaigns against the Soviet abuses. It could therefore be argued that the Bukovsky papers not only triggered a response from the British psychiatric community towards the Soviet abuses, but that it also started the organisation of groups and individuals that were to later play a prominent role. These papers gave a coherent empirical base with which to argue against the Soviet abuses, and their influence can be felt on two different levels: the short term interest in the plight of dissenters, and the long term organisation of concerned individuals. This can be clearly seen in the response of the WPA. In 1971, the WPA congress failed to take action based on these papers. However, at the following WPA congress in Honolulu in 1977, more active steps to place pressure on the All Union Society of Neuropathologists and Psychiatrists (AUSNP) occurred.[332] Two resolutions were passed at this conference, one that censured the Soviets for their actions and the second which established a WPA review committee to assess accusations of psychiatric abuses. Both of these resolutions clearly targeted the reports of abuses from the Soviet Union.[333] This shift arguably occurred due to the efforts of human rights organisations who responded to, and publicised the Bukovsky papers. Whilst it would be erroneous to describe these documents as the start of the public engagement with this form of human rights abuse, they certainly acted as a catalyst with which

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[331] S. Bloch et. al., 'Vladimir Bukovsky', *The Times*, 30 March 1972, p. 17.

[332] The AUSNP were the Soviet central organisation of psychiatrists, akin to the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Britain.

[333] 'Soviets Left WPA Under Expulsion Threat', *Psychiatric News*, Vol. 45, No. 22 (November 2010) p. 11. See Van Voren, *Cold War in Psychiatry*, pp. 189-223.

individuals in the West began to take action. The impact that these documents had on the British response to Soviet dissent must not be underestimated.

What is clear in analysis of the cases of Grigorenko, Medvedev and Bukovsky is how the British perception towards victims of Soviet psychiatric abuse developed from the mid 1960s to the 1970s. From the minimal public interest in Grigorenko's incarceration, through rising concern at Medvedev's plight to the beginnings of a coordinated international response to the Bukovsky papers, these three cases illustrate a development in the public discourse on Soviet dissenters in Britain. This development occurred through the increased dissemination of material regarding dissenters, such as memoirs and the Bukovsky papers, and increased attention on the abuses from the media. These developments occur in a cumulative manner, in some respects akin to opening Pandora's box on information regarding each dissident – once it is in the public domain it cannot be removed. If one takes the difference in public response from the first showing of 'The Man Who Wouldn't Keep Quiet' through to the release of the Bukovsky papers, the difference in public response over two years is remarkable. The influence of Bukovsky in this field was to continue increasing. By 1977, Dr Allan Wynn of the Working Group noted that Bukovsky 'had achieved a recognition that made it impossible for his appeal to be dismissed as just another attack on psychiatry by a disaffected person'.[334] The fact that the WPA dealt with his appeal to the 1977 congress seriously shows not only how their respect for his position had increased since 1971, but also how much the public discourse on Soviet psychiatric abuse had developed over this period in Britain.

British Cultural Exposure to Psychiatric abuse

Alexander: I have no symptoms, I have opinions.
Doctor: Your opinions are your symptoms. Your disease is dissent.[335]

The British public was first exposed to the potential of widespread abuse of psychiatric treatment in the Soviet Union with the publication of Valery Tarsis's *Ward 7* in 1965.[336] Tarsis was

[334] A. Wynn, *Notes of A Non Conspirator: Working with Russian Dissidents* (London, 1987) pp. 101-102.
[335] T. Stoppard, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour: A Play for Actors and Orchestra and Professional Foul* (London, 2009) p. 28.

an author in the Soviet Union who had on several occasions failed to have his work published via official channels. In frustration and desperation, he sent a manuscript copy of an earlier novel *The Bluebottle* to the West for publication, something that he did not keep secret from the Soviet authorities.[337] Before its publication, and as an apparent punishment, Tarsis was confined to a *psikushka* in Moscow. *Ward 7*, as its subtitle *An Autobiographical Novel* would suggest, is Tarsis' account of his time in a *psikhushka*. *Ward 7's* main character Valentine Almazov is clearly a direct representation of Tarsis himself, and like Solzhenitsyn's characters Ivan Denisovich Shukov and Gleb Vikentich Nerzhin, is used as a vehicle through which to describe the personal recollections of events through a literary medium.[338] It is also worth noting that the title of Tarsis' work is drawn from the Chekhov short story *Ward No. 6* in which a Russian doctor's interaction with a mentally ill patient lead to his own incarceration within a mental asylum.[339] The link to Chekhov's work of the late nineteenth century can be considered as an inference that psychiatric abuse of this kind has long been possible, and that Tarsis' work – and subsequently the Soviet abuse – is simply the next chapter in a wider story of the misuse of psychiatry. It could also perhaps be an attempt to raise the credibility of Tarsis' assertions, trying to establish his piece in the wider context of Russian literature – something which lending Chekov's reputation may have done. The reference to Chekhov could be also noted as an example of the wider, perhaps unconscious, attempt of dissident authors to place their work into the wider tradition of Russian literature.

The publication of *Ward 7* in Britain by the Collins & Harvill Press in 1965 was the first moment when the widespread abuse of psychiatric treatment in the Soviet Union was noted in the West.[340] *Time* described the work as 'a searing indictment of the Communist system' and the

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[336] Tarsis, *Ward 7.*

[337] V. Tarsis, *The Bluebottle* (London, 1962)

[338] Ivan Denisovich Shukov is the main character in A. Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (London, 1962), Gleb Vikentich Nerzhin is one of the lead characters in A. Solzhenitsyn, *The First Circle* (London, 1969). Both are considered to be autobiographical characters depicting sections from Solzhenitsyn's life.

[339] A. Chekhov, *Ward No. 6* (1892) available at http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/ac/w6-01.html (Accessed 11 October 2010).

[340] Collins & Harvill Press, and their predecessor the Harvill Press, translated and published an array of dissident material in English from the early 1960s onwards. Their translations include Tarsis, *Ward 7*; Solzhenitsyn, *The First Circle;* Plyushch, *History's Carnival*; A. Sakharov, *My Country and the* World (London,

first to detail the process of psychiatric incarceration of 'enemies' of the state.[341] It should be noted that the publication of Ward 7 occurred in the aftermath of the thaw in culture and literature during Nikita Khrushchev's time as General Secretary, which had seen the publication of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in both the Soviet Union and the West. This was an ever changing period in the discursive representation and popular perception of the Soviet Union in the West, which had seemed to some areas of British society as an infallible and utopian system that the West should aspire to. This position had been challenged by the Soviet response to the Hungarian Uprising in 1956, shaking the beliefs of many on the British left. In this context, *Ward 7* was another bombshell for communism in the West, challenging an already shaken faith in the Marxist-Leninist model. Like *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, however, it is difficult to really assess the impact that this book had on wider British society's perception of the Soviet Union. There is little commentary on the publication of the book itself in the British press in 1965, although it was serialised in *The Observer* on 2, 9, and 16 May 1965 and was claimed to have had a wide audience.[342] Newspaper articles on Tarsis in this period focus primarily on his emigration from the Soviet Union, and his comments about the Soviet system made whilst in the West.[343] This perhaps says more about the author rather than his work. Tarsis was an outspoken individual upon his arrival in the West, something that may have distracted the media attention away from his work. When this is compared to Solzhenitsyn, who was renowned for his reclusive behaviour after his exile from the Soviet Union, it could be argued that the media attention on Tarsis was diverted to the character rather than his work.[344]

The importance of *Ward 7* is distinctively different to the success of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Both books broke public silence in the West on different aspects of the

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1974); and Grigorenko, *Memoirs*. More on the early years of this publisher can be found in the memoirs of one of its founders and translators, Manya Harari. See M. Harari, *Memoirs 1906-1969* (London, 1972).

[341] 'Russia: The Inconvenient Citizens', *Time*, 21 May, 1965, available at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,901695,00.html (Accessed 11 October 2010).

[342] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 65, footnote 13.

[343] See F. Wells, 'I am No Traitor, Says Rebel From Russia', *Daily Mirror*, 11 February 1966, p. 2; 'Tarsis: Let Me See Daughter', *Daily Mirror*, 18 March 1966, p. 7; and 'Mr. Tarsis Attacks Regime', *The Times*, 11 May 1966, p. 8.

[344] For an example of Solzhenitsyn's reclusive nature whilst in the West see 'Solzhenitsyn in W Germany', ITV Late Evening News, News At Ten, 14 February 1974, broadcast at 22:00:00.

authoritarian regime in the Soviet Union – the Gulag and the *psikhushka*. Solzhenitsyn's work opened the floodgates for the wider recognition in the West of human rights violation in the Soviet Union, particularly the extent of abuse present in the Gulag under Stalin. *Ward 7*, on the other hand was revealing of a new form of abuse uses by the Soviet authorities. Peter Reddaway recalled that *Ward 7* had a large impact on him, noting how influential it was on his activism for Soviet dissidents.[345] Given that *Ward 7* was the first piece to discuss Soviet psychiatric abuse, it is likely that others were also influenced in a similar manner. Indeed, it could be argued that since this was the first piece that uncovered the abuses, all subsequent work that protested against psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union from the West stemmed in some form from its taboo breaking publication.

As a work of literature, *Ward 7* is engrossing and evocative. It is clear from the emotions raised in the narrative, and the disturbing details of the psychiatric incarceration of a sane man that Tarsis either had a terrifically vivid and warped imagination or that the details of his story were based on his experiences. In hindsight, the details that came out of the Soviet Union via *samizdat* and with the emigration of psychiatrists and former psychiatric patients heavily suggest that Tarsis' work was based on the reality of his experiences. In fact, when this work is taken into the context of later pieces written about the psychiatric abuse that occurred in the Soviet Union, the amount of detail that Tarsis goes into is particularly impressive; drawing the conclusion that perhaps this work is more a non-fiction recollection of events than a novel; something that is suggested by the author. Bloch and Reddaway even assert that *Ward 7* should be considered as a primary source regarding the internment of sane dissidents in mental hospitals.[346] *Ward 7* effectively opened up the possibility of discussing psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union without it being dismissed as a complete fiction or figment of the imagination.

Another key cultural moment for the public recognition of Soviet psychiatric abuse in Britain came over a decade after the publication of *Ward 7. Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*

[345] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010.
[346] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 66.

(EGBDF) was written in 1978 by Tom Stoppard, the noted British playwright, with a musical score produce by André Previn.[347] Stoppard was a renowned supporter of human rights and dissidents in the Soviet Union, and was involved in campaigns that supported *refuseniks* and condemned the abuse of psychiatry. EGBDF is set predominantly within a psychiatric hospital and explores the position of a sane dissident writer known only as Alexander, alongside a mentally insane patient Ivanov, with whom he shares a cell. Ivanov suffers from what can only be described as extreme delusions; notably that he is constantly surrounded by an orchestra that he is conducting. The play itself does contain a full orchestra within it, showing the audience Ivanov's delusions, and using music to heighten the emotions raised throughout the play. EGBDF explores Soviet psychiatric abuse in a dark manner, infusing humour and typical Stoppardian word play to illustrate the barbarity of the psychiatric incarceration of a sane man, and his interactions with genuinely ill patients. EGBDF also illustrates the wider social stigma for the family of dissidents who were sectioned, showing Alexander's son Sasha, and how he dealt not only with being separated from his father, but also with the humiliations he endured from his teacher. Interestingly, these humiliations also include references to the role that Western organisations played in supporting this fictional dissident, perhaps subtly noting that support for these dissenters was needed from the audience. In one scene, Sasha's teacher notes sarcastically that he should have special treatment due to his fathers position, stating:

> Yes, your name goes around the world. By telegram. It is printed in the newspapers. It is spoken on the radio. With such a famous name why should you bother with different colours? We will change the music for you. It will look like a field of buttercups, and sound like dinnertime.[348]

EGBDF was dedicated to Vladimir Bukovsky and Victor Fainberg. Stoppard met Fainberg in April 1976 whilst writing a play about a millionaire triangle-player. During this meeting, Fainberg expressed his concerns about the plight of Bukovsky to Stoppard, who swiftly rewrote this play into EGDBF, undoubtedly due to the experiences of meeting this dissident.[349] Stoppard notes that

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[347] See T. Stoppard, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul* (London, 2009). First published in 1978.
[348] Stoppard, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul*, p. 13.
[349] Ibid, p. v-vi.

both Fainberg and Bukovsky make appearances in the play itself; Bukovsky as the unknown 'friend C' and Fainberg as one of the group of dissidents referred to only as a letter between M and S in the dialogue.[350] Bukovsky was even invited to the rehearsals of the play before it had been shown to the public, although Stoppard notes that he found it embarrassing, and Ian McKellen, who played the role of Alexander, 'seized up in the middle of a speech touching on the experiences of [the] visitor, and found it impossible to continue'.[351] McKellen later noted in a letter to Stoppard that 'the rehearsal when C [Bukovsky] walked into Floral Street was overwhelming + I don't think I recovered the objective composure which your play demanded. Such a **big** hall, such a **big** orchestra, such **big** themes'.[352] This clearly shows the light in which Stoppard and the actor in question held Bukovsky, as a character whom they felt they could never do justice to the storyline, having never experienced a similar period of incarceration. It also suggests that Stoppard was a deep admirer of Bukovsky and other dissidents, something which goes some way to explain why he choose to write a play on this particular topic. It is also interesting to note the admiration that Bukovsky has for Stoppard's ability as a playwright, and especially the way he weaves an array of themes and events into his plays. Bukovsky is full of praise for EGBDF, especially its recent production at the National Theatre, and *Travesties*, another of Stoppard's works that he greatly enjoyed.[353]

Given the logistics of having a full orchestra, EGBDF has only been shown on several occasions. The first performances at the Royal Festival Hall, London, in July 1977 contained a cast of incredible talent, many of whom were to become household names. Ian McKellen, John Wood, Philip Locke and Patrick Stewart were amongst the cast, along with accompaniment from the

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[350] Ibid, p. vi.
[351] Ibid, p. vii.
[352] Letter from Ian McKellen to Tom Stoppard, dated 2 August 1977, 10.4 Every Good Boy Deserves Favour Correspondence and Production file, 1976-1979, Tom Stoppard Papers, Harry Ransom Center University of Austin at Texas. Emphasis from original letter. McKellen also notes on a page of his website referring to EGBDF that 'When Bukovsky slipped into our rehearsals one afternoon in London, the juxtaposition of dramatic fiction and actual fact, rendered me speechless and we abandoned rehearsals for tea.' 'Words From Ian McKellen' (April 2008), available at http://www.mckellen.com/stage/00071.htm (accessed 6 June 2012).
[353] Interview with Vladimir Bukovsky, 18 January 2011. Bukovsky was so impressed with Stoppard that he insisted his protégé go and see EGBDF, suggesting not only how much he enjoyed the play, but also how useful it is. See also T. Stoppard, *Travesties* (London, 1974).

London Symphony Orchestra.[354] These first performances included the highlight of being the last performance at the Mermaid Theatre, London, in 1978 before it was renovated. This performance was reviewed by Ned Chaillet in *The Times*, who noted that the play 'works as entertainment and as a salutary reminder of grim, political truths'. Despite this positive recognition of the wider political message of the play, Chaillet also noted that not everyone in the audience would remember that the piece was about a sane dissident and an insane man, both of whom were incarcerated.[355] Others criticised Stoppard's play for its ambiguous end, in which Alexander is mistakenly released by a KGB guard who confuses him for a different patient. Martin Huckerby, who reviewed the play for The Times, noted that 'plenty of critics came to the wrong conclusion that the dissident was responsible for the confusion and was duping the KGB', rather than the ironic twist that Stoppard intended.[356]

EGBDF was also produced for television, and was shown on BBC1 in July 1978, allowing a wider audience who might not have had access to the theatre to see it.[357] However, critics were not impressed by the television production, noting that the three distinctive 'stages' that the play was set in did not translate well onto the screen.[358] Despite these concerns about the aesthetics of the production itself, the fact that a drama about the incarceration of sane dissenters in the *psikhushka* appeared on mainstream British television suggests that a wide audience would have been exposed to the issues of Soviet psychiatric abuse. This would have had a dramatic effect on the creation of the public discourse on these abuses. On the other hand it is difficult, if not impossible, to assess not only the number of people who saw and understood the wider ethical and moral messages throughout EGBDF, but also how many separated fiction from reality. Stoppard's play, although based on the accounts and experiences of Soviet dissidents, may have been misunderstood as a completely fictional work of a playwright. This is something that Stoppard's notably dry and dark style might not have assisted. However, regardless of the

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[354] Stoppard, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, p. 3.
[355] N. Chaillet, 'Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, Mermaid', *The Times*, 15 June 1978, p. 15.
[356] M. Huckerby, 'KGB to blame in the end', *The Times*, 17 August 1978, p. 12.
[357] 'Shakespearian plays start programme', *The Times*, 19 July 1978, p. 19.
[358] M. Church, 'Every Good Boy Deserves Favour: BBC2', *The Times*, 15 November 1979.

audience's assumption of fiction or reality, EGBDF was one of the most important cultural introductions to the concept of Soviet psychiatric abuse – something that informed many of the potential for, and implications of psychiatric abuse.

What is clear about EGBDF is that it drew discussion. Although critics were unsure that its political motives left a clear and lasting impression on the audience, the sheer virtue of its discussion further developed the public awareness of Soviet psychiatric abuse. Discussion of this piece in broadsheet newspapers necessitated a brief description of the plays plot – something which in itself inevitably led to discussion of psychiatric abuse. Stoppard's keen intention to keep the issue of Soviet dissent, and the persecution of dissidents in the public consciousness would have been carried out not only in the showing of EGBDF itself, but also in **all** reviews of the play, regardless of how they assessed its quality. If anything, a critical review may well have drawn more attention to the psychiatric abuses than an entirely positive one.

EGBDF is now considered by many as a classic with a brief sell out run at the National Theatre in 2009, that led to an extension of dates into 2010 which received an array of positive reviews from critics.[359] The fact that this play attracted sell out audiences in 2010 suggests not only that Stoppard and Previn have created a fantastic play, but also that its plot is interesting and emotive enough to draw a crowd. Even if those who have seen the play do not fully comprehend the reality of the abuses that are being portrayed, the fact that they are being made aware of them is enough to have an effect on the way in which they perceive, and therefore discuss Soviet dissent.

Both *Ward 7* and EGBDF were key cultural events that raised the issue of Soviet psychiatric abuse with the British public. They were also accompanied by other events that discussed psychiatric treatment at the time, and the forced incarceration of mentally ill people in a more general setting. Most important of these was the 1975 film *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's*

[359] See http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/47002/productions/every-good-boy-deserves-favour.html (Accessed 11 October 2010) and http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/?lid=47002&dspl=reviews (Accessed 11 October 2010).

Nest.[360] Starring Jack Nicholson, this film's plot covers one man's attempt to remain in an American psychiatric hospital instead of returning to prison by proving to the staff that he is insane. It is only when he is permanently sectioned that he realises the barbarity of his situation, and tries in desperation to escape. Although the film itself does not overtly cover issues of psychiatric abuse, the domineering figure of Nurse Ratched appears to revel in her position of power over the patients, and perhaps alludes to the potential of the abuse of this form of treatment. Issues of forced incarceration are also raised throughout the film, becoming a prominent aspect of the storyline itself. A dark scene that shows Nicholson's character being subjected to Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)[361] against his will perhaps shows the haunting nature of conventional psychiatric treatments, let alone unconventional uses. This scene might have highlighted the potential abuses in countries where medical treatment was perceived to be less modern than the United States. Activists, such as Dr Allan Wynn, noted the potential influence of this film in depicting the potential for the abuse of psychiatry to a wide audience.[362]

One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest can be rightly considered as a cinematic classic, something which was clearly seen in both the US and Britain, receiving five Academy Awards and six BAFTA's. Such was its acclaim that it was the first film in over four decades to win all five major Academy Awards in one year.[363] It is also interesting to note that in 1977 *Professional Foul* – a television production written by Stoppard for the BBC in which a Cambridge Professor travels to Prague for an academic conference and meets with a former student who had become a dissident

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[360] M. Forman, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* (Warner Brothers, 1975).

[361] Electro Convulsive Therapy is a treatment, initially developed in the 1930s in which an electric current is passed through the brain in order to produce an epileptic fit. There are a variety of hypothesise as to why this reduce symptoms of severe mental illnesses. For more information on this treatment see The Royal College of Psychiatrists online information about ECT at http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/ect.aspx [accessed 17 November 2010].

[362] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 30.

[363] Academy Awards are often referred to by the nickname the 'Oscars'. BAFTA stands for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts See One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest entry on the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) at http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0073486/awards [Accessed 5 November 2010]; BAFTA award listings for 1976, available at http://www.bafta.org/awards/film/nominations/?year=1976 [Accessed 5 November 2010].

– was awarded the Best Actor BAFTA for Peter Barkworth who played the lead role.[364] Stoppard also won The Writers Award at 1977 BAFTAs, which highlights not only the recognition of his writing talent, but perhaps also the acclaim to which his politically motivated pieces had been received by the critics.[365] His high profile, undoubtedly boosted by these awards, would also have likely attracted crowds to his plays, something that would have further enabled discussion of Soviet dissent.

The success of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* in Britain exposed the public to the potential abuse of psychiatric treatment and the horrific side-effects that it could have for those involved. Whilst this film did not directly discuss Soviet abuses, there are clear parallels to this treatment, and the reception of this film in popular culture undoubtedly impacted upon public awareness of the potential of these abuses.

The cases of Grigorenko, Medvedev and Bukovsky, timed with the cultural discussion of psychiatric abuse, led to a clear response from sections of British society to these horrific abuses. A variety of human rights groups formed in Britain in the 1970s, specifically to campaign on behalf of dissenters who had been subjected to psychiatric abuse. These groups played a substantial role in informing the British public about the abuses, distributing information to politicians, journalists and concerned individuals alike. Whilst these groups all had the same aim – to stop the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union – they all had distinctive approaches to this issue.

Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry

The Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry(MSCSJ) was formed in February 1972 at the invitation of a leading Jewish MP, Greville Janner.[366] Janner's work in supporting Soviet Jewry groups is well documented in his memoirs *To Life!*; in which he describes his efforts

[364] BAFTA award listings for 1977, available at http://www.bafta.org/awards/television/nominations/?year=1977 [Accessed 5 November 2010]. See T. Stoppard, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*.
[365] BAFTA award listings for 1977, available at http://www.bafta.org/awards/television/nominations/?year=1977 [Accessed 5 November 2010].
[366] Greville Janner Q.C., MP is now Lord Janner of Braunstone after stepping down from the House of Commons in 1997.

and those of his wife Myra, in forming and sustaining groups that campaigned on behalf of *refuseniks*.[367] Janner's involvement in these groups often included no more than offering his name in support of a campaign, raising the plight of *refuseniks* in Parliament, or utilising his prominent position to invite concerned individuals to form groups.[368] The MSCSJ was born out of an invitation from Janner to an array of Jewish and non-Jewish doctors, scientists and medical practitioners to form a committee to campaign on behalf of the *refuseniks*. This committee was chaired by the psychiatrist, Professor Harold Merskey, who had already been allocated the role at his late arrival to the initial meeting of the committee.[369] Merskey attributes this to being due to his prestigious position at the Maudsley hospital, London, which specialises in psychiatric research and treatment of mental health conditions. Merskey contends that the Soviet authorities held positions such as his in high regard, and it was thought that by making him the chairman, the committee's protests would carry more weight with the Soviet hierarchy.[370] Campaigns conducted by individuals in respected scientific and medical positions should not be underestimated. Allan Wynn, noted that:

> Every Soviet bureaucrat lives in dread of committing an offence which can be brought home to him. Paper is dangerous in the Soviet Union but it is also immensely important...Letters which come from scientific or official bodies have an even greater impact – they may never be answered but they are rarely ignored. The effect is subtle and cumulative. The Soviet government craves respectability – it knows how damaging its image of brutality and inhumanity is.[371]

The impact that these prominent individuals could have on the Soviet treatment of dissidents was vast. Letters from official medical or scientific organisations were unlikely to have gone unopened by the Soviet authorities, something that set them apart from human rights organisations whose letters were doubtless completely ignored. The Soviet desire to maintain

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[367] G. Janner, *To Life! The Memoirs of Greville Janner* (Stroud, 2006), pp. 231-246.
[368] For an example of Janner's parliamentary speeches regarding Soviet Jewry, see Janner's speech in the House of Commons, Foreign Affairs (East-West Relations)24 February 1976, Hansard, available at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/feb/24/foreign-affairs-east-west-relations#S5CV0906P0_19760224_HOC_323. For more on Janner's involvement in Anglo-Soviet Jewry groups see Janner, *To Life!*, pp. 231-246.
[369] Telephone interview with Harold Merskey, 22 October 2010.
[370] Telephone interview with Harold Merskey, 22 October 2010.
[371] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 101

links with scientific organisations gave these activists a clear advantage, something they sought to exploit.

The initial aims of the committee are clearly set out in a document entitled 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry'. This report highlights the individuals that were involved from the formation of the group and outlines the methods of the committee. It notes that the committee was concerned primarily with organising publicity for individual scientists or doctors in the Soviet Union who were 'suffering at the hands of the Russians'.[372] This involved sending letters to both the mainstream press and the more specialist scientific media outlining the abuses and calling for support. This included letters published in *The Lancet* and *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, two internationally respected medical publications; and references to the work of the committee in *The Times*.[373] This would have undoubtedly improved the credibility of the group, and spread their message across a wide professional audience of scientists, psychiatrists and other medical practitioners alike. These letters were supplemented by articles written for journals and newspapers on the abuses by members of the committee. Harold Merskey was at the forefront of these publications, having articles published in *The British Journal of Psychiatry* and *The Journal of Medical Ethics* on the political influence in the diagnosis of sluggish schizophrenia and the need for political neutrality in dealing with issues regarding medical ethics, particularly in the Soviet Union.[374] The MSCSJ also aided publicity for the plight of Soviet Jewry by assisting other campaigns, most notably those of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry (the 35's) who will be considered in depth in the final chapter of this thesis. These

[372] 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry', date of production unknown, probably mid 1970s. Copy of report sent to author by Harold Merskey.
[373] H. Merskey, 'Diagnosis of Schizophrenia', *The Lancet*, 9 December 1972, p. 1246; H. Merskey, 'Political Dissenters in Mental Hospitals', *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 122 (1973) pp. 237-238; 'The Times Diary, The Slow Shuffle of Democracy', *The Times*, 3 May 1974, p. 18; and 'Dr Shtern is given eight-year sentence', *The Times*, 2 January 1975, p. 1.
[374] Merskey and Shafran, 'Political Hazards in the Diagnosis of 'Sluggish Schizophrenia'', pp. 247-256; and H. Merskey, 'Political neutrality and international cooperation in medicine', *Journal of Medical Ethics*, Vol. 4 (1978) pp. 74-77.

efforts at developing publicity for the plight of Soviet dissenters was mainly through obtaining signatures for prominent advertisements and petitions.[375]

This report also notes the support that the committee had from the 35's and other British Jewish organisations from its formation, suggesting a link with the wider community supporting Soviet-Jewry that was forming in Britain in the 1970s. Despite this common link, there were disagreements between the MSCSJ and the 35's. In a letter to Doreen Gainsford, a leading member of the 35's, Merskey criticised the fact that 35ers had taken Mrs Nashpits and Mrs Tsitlionok, the wives of two *refuseniks*, to a demonstration outside the Home Office in London. Members of the MSCSJ had requested that the 35's not protest on certain issues until the British Dental Association had approached the Soviet Embassy in London at the behest of the MSCSJ. Merskey felt that using these guests in this way was deeply damaging, and noted that the 35's were good enough at demonstrating themselves to not need to use them in this manner.[376] This highlights the seemingly reflective nature of the MSCSJ compared to the 35's in this period. The MSCSJ appear to have had much more professional output than the 35's, and focused on building up public information and the support of more established groups rather than the protesting and more direct action of the Women's Campaign. This is perhaps due to the background of MSCSJ members, and the professional connections that they were able to exploit. Whilst offering support for the efforts of the 35's, it appears that they did not see eye-to-eye on some aspects of the 35's public demonstrations.

Although the MSCSJ concerned itself mainly with increasing publicity for the plight of the *refuseniks*, it did also have a humanitarian element to its efforts.[377] The MSCSJ was involved in the acquisition of specialist medical supplies which were unavailable in the Soviet Union for *refuseniks* who needed treatment. In one case, Professor Alexander Lerner, a cybernetician based in Moscow, received a small plastic net from the committee, which was needed in an operation on

[375] 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry'.
[376] Letter from Harold Merskey to Doreen Gainsford, 19 March 1975, Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Archive, University of Southampton, Hartley Library Special Collections, (hereafter UofS) MS 254/1/3/4, 35's administration file.
[377] 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry', p. 1.

his gall bladder, but was not produced in a sufficient quality in the Soviet Union.[378] This example of the supply of medical equipment to Soviet Jewry perhaps suggests that the MSCSJ were in some respects a humanitarian organisation, based around the foundations of a more traditional human rights pressure group.

Whilst the MSCSJ was founded to campaign for *refuseniks*, it soon became an important group in the campaign against Soviet psychiatric abuse. Through its interaction with *refuseniks*, the issue of the political abuse of psychiatry came to the fore, something which was of much interest to many of the committee's supporters given their scientific and medical backgrounds. Merskey himself notes that he came into the field of Soviet psychiatric abuse indirectly, something that is perhaps unusual given his professional background as a renowned psychiatrist.[379] In telephone conversations with the famed Soviet Academician Veniamin Levich, Merskey came across the case of Yan Krylsky, a *refusenik* who had been threatened with detention in a *psikhushka* by men in white coats. At the request of Krylsky, Merskey conducted a short psychiatric diagnosis over the phone. This is something that he admits, on reflection, was a very bold and somewhat careless move as it is very unusual to conduct a diagnosis without seeing the patient in the flesh. Merskey recalls that he gave the impression that this was not a formal diagnosis, but a statement that, given the evidence he had heard, Krylsky appeared not to suffer from any mental deficiency.[380] Interestingly, Merskey notes that this admission gave Krylsky a sense of protection from the threat of forced psychiatric detention.[381] This is perhaps due to Krylsky attributing Merskey's comments that he appeared to be without psychiatric disorder as a professional affirmation of his sanity. Whilst this is not to suggest that Krylsky either suffered or did not suffer from a mental disorder, it does appear as if he felt this verbal confirmation from a Western psychiatrist was enough to protect him from the Soviet psychiatric abuses. This can be

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[378] 'Professor Lerner Receives his "Spare Part"', Press release from Greville Janner (Undated), UofS, MS 254/1/2/53, Janner Papers.
[379] Letter from Harold Merskey to Marie Girard, 9 January 2008, p. 1. Marie Girard is a French student based in Paris who had inquired about Merskey's work on Soviet psychiatric abuse. Copy of letter sent to author.
[380] Letter from Harold Merskey to Marie Girard, 9 January 2008. p. 2; and telephone interview with Harold Merskey, 22 October 2010.
[381] Letter from Harold Merskey to Marie Girard, 9 January 2008. p. 2.

seen to be like the protection that Andrei Sakharov received from the Western knowledge of his plight, meaning that the Soviet authorities could not use the full extent of their might against him without flaring the attention of the West. Despite this feeling of protection, Krylsky did spend time in a psychiatric institution against his will and was 'treated' with pyrexia-inducing injections.[382] Krylsky was later released, and allowed to emigrate to Israel in January 1974.[383] The MSCSJ claimed the improvement of Krylsky's position and the conditions of his treatment as one of their main and definable achievements, further highlighting the humanitarian aspect of their efforts.[384]

Krylsky's case is important in analysis of the work of the MSCSJ not only because it was the first of several that the group became involved in, but because it highlighted the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, and encouraged some MSCSJ members to campaign against it. This was to be of extreme importance, as some of these members, most notably Harold Merskey, petitioned the Royal College to take a stand against the Soviet abuses. Merskey seconded an important resolution of the Royal College in 1973 which condemned the Soviet abuses of psychiatry, an action which was no doubt influenced by his earlier interaction with Krylsky's case.[385] Had he not taken such an interest in this case, he might not have leant his support to the later Royal College resolution.

Whilst the MSCSJ cannot be considered to have been a widespread campaign against the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, it did engage key figures, such as Merskey, in these areas. Indeed, the articles produced by Merskey are undoubtedly the most influential activism conducted by the MSCSJ. This had a significant effect on the later campaigns against psychiatric abuse from bodies such as the Royal College.

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[382] Pyrexia is the medical term for controlled hypothermia or fever. See E. N. Marieb, *Human Anatomy and Physiology, Sixth Edition* (San Francisco, 2004) p. 989; Letter from Harold Merskey to Marie Girard, 9 January 2008. p. 2; and 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry', p. 3.
[383] For details on the case of Jan Krylsky see Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 369
[384] 'First Report of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry', p. 3.
[385] See B. Levin, 'Soviet Repression: Western Scientists are now at a crossroads of conscience', *The Times*, 7 May 1974, p. 14.

Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals

The Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals[386] was founded in February 1971, and described by Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway as a 'small ad hoc research group, composed mainly of psychiatrists, human rights experts and specialists in Soviet affairs'.[387]It was initially founded in response to the Bukovsky Papers which had arrived in Britain via France in late February 1971. Members of the Working Group translated these materials, and distributed them to the wider press. The Working Group was formed primarily to spread information about the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, and to use their influence to change institutional policy from groups such as the Royal College and the WPA.

Prior to the Autumn of 1973, the vast majority of campaigns against the Soviet abuses came from the Working Group, who concerned themselves with making the public aware of these human rights violations. They did this through an array of articles that were published in the medical and general press, and through the mobilisation of psychiatrists.[388] Members of the Working Group were also involved in the media, in which they discussed the position of Soviet psychiatry. Professor Jenner, a member of the Working Group, appeared on the BBC Radio programme 'Protest or Madness?' which discussed the available evidence regarding the abuses.[389]

The early years of the Working Group are unclear, due perhaps in part to the *ad hoc* nature in which the group operated, a phrase that is regularly used to describe this body. Indeed, the manner in which the group operated goes some way to suggest why there are limited archival materials from this organisation compared to some of its counterparts in this period. Peter Reddaway certainly played a leading role in the group, with Dr Allan Wynn, the group's later

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[386] Referred to from here on as the 'Working Group', not to be confused with the 'Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes', a Moscow based group of dissidents campaigning against psychiatric abuse.

[387] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 17.

[388] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals* p. 295. For an extensive list of these articles see Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 484 endnote 47.

[389] Broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 17 January 1973. Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals* p. 295.

Chairman, noting that he had kept the group active 'at the cost of sacrificing much of his time and energy'.[390] The Working Group was comprised of an array of psychiatrists and other concerned individuals, notably Gery Low-Beer, Sidney Bloch and Christine Shaw who were particularly active in the groups work.[391]

In June 1982, Wynn took over the position of Chairman from Reddaway, who became its Vice-Chairman.[392] Wynn's autobiographical account, *Notes of a Non Conspirator: Working with Russian Dissidents* documents the period 1978 to 1983, and includes details of the activities of the Working Group and its relationship with the Royal College. In this period the Working Group pressured the Soviet authorities to conform to the 1977 WPA resolution condemning the political abuse of psychiatry; an impossible task as this was something that it did not want to do. He notes that the Working Group devoted most of its time in this period 'accumulating, assessing and correlating 'objective' evidence on the abuse', a notably empirical approach.[393] This renewed need to collate information on the psychiatric abuses in the Soviet Union was probably brought about by the formation of the WPA review committee at the congress in Honolulu in 1977. This committee was formed to investigate reports of psychiatric abuse, and as such the sharing of information on abuses became an integral part of the operation of the Working Group. Given the manner in which the Working Group collected information, it is perhaps of little surprise that it built up strong links with Royal College, particularly its Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry (SCPAP), which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The main output of the Working Group was an irregular news bulletin which it produced from 1977 onwards. These news bulletins contained an impressive amount of information on the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, and were produced with 'extraordinary care and attention' by their principal editors, Peter Reddaway and Christine Shaw.[394] They extensively

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[390] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 99.
[391] Ibid, p.99.
[392] International Association on the Political Use of Psychiatry Information Bulletin, No. 4 (English edition), June 1982, p.7.
[393] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 105.
[394] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 116.

outline cases of psychiatric abuse, discussing their background and offering reasons for the Soviet authorities action against them. For example, in the Working Group's News Bulletin No. 3, 44 cases of those interned in psychiatric institutions are listed, including details of their professions, background and addresses of their either their guardians, partners, or parents in the Soviet Union.[395] These publications also list the addresses of national psychiatric bodies and anti-psychiatric abuse organisations in length. These are broken down by country and include details for groups such as Amnesty International, the WPA, and the Royal College. Interestingly, this breakdown by country also includes a section on the Soviet Union, giving details for leading psychiatrists such as Snezhnevsky, Lunts and Morozov, and the addresses of prison hospitals in Leningrad, Kazan and Smolensk.[396] The intention of the Working Group supplying these details is clear: to allow others to write letters of protest and support. The effectiveness of appeals to organisations in both the Soviet Union and the West on behalf of an individual dissident is made explicit in Working Group news bulletins. Earlier in the June 1977 news bulletin, letters to Aleksandr Podrabinek from 'colleagues in medicine and public health' were requested as a matter of urgency.[397] The Working Group were clearly noting that letters from medical organisations or individual doctors in the West sent directly to Soviet psychiatrists had much effect. The inclusion of these details was clearly in an attempt to spur individuals who had received this bulletin to put pen to paper and write to these organisations and individuals.

This list of addresses and contact details for organisations provided in these bulletins would have proved invaluable for organisations such as Amnesty International, who could forward this information onto its local bodies to use in their campaigns. The list of victims of psychiatric abuse also contained references to cases that had been submitted to the WPA review committee, suggesting that the Working Group had good links with the WPA and its member

[395] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 3, October 1980, pp. 4-14.
[396] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977, pp. 16-19.
[397] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977, p. 11.

organisations.[398] This was important to include in this publication as it showed that these cases were receiving attention from international psychiatric organisations who were concerned about these abuses.

Alongside these details of victims of psychiatric abuse were lengthy commentaries on the international protests against psychiatric abuses. For example, News Bulletin No. 1 devoted seven pages to reporting the WPA Congress in Honolulu, a substantial amount given the length of this publication.[399] This report outlined how the Soviet authorities had tried to manipulate the WPA for their own ends, and what its attitude towards this congress was. It also outlined the procedure of the WPA General Assembly, detailing how the WPA operated for those who were unaware of its practices. This can be seen to be in an attempt to educate people in the workings of the WPA so that attempts to influence its output could be efficiently targeted.

An interesting feature of the Working Group news bulletins is the prominence of their medical panel on the front page. Each news bulletin lists, in full, the psychiatrists who comprised the group's medical panel, with earlier issues detailing the full medical qualifications of each member. The list of the group's medical panel also appears on the front of some of its other publications, including the 1980 report *Soviet Opponents of Political Psychiatry in the USSR*.[400] This impressive list of medical acronyms and capital letters takes up a sizeable section of the front page of these publications, and nods towards the medical expertise and academic qualification of the group. This is arguably in an attempt to reinforce that the material presented in the Working Group publications was reliable due to the reputation and expertise of those associated with it. It could also be argued that this was to present the Working Group as a concerned scientific organisation rather than a typical human rights group. This is supported by the distinct lack of

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[398] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 3, (October 1980), pp. 4-14.
[399] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977, pp. 3-9.
[400] See Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977; Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 3, October 1980; Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *The Political Abuse of Psychiatry in the Soviet Union* (London, 1977); and Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *Soviet Opponents of Political Psychiatry in the USSR* (London, 1980).

reference to Peter Reddaway, someone who played a key role in the workings of the Working Group, perhaps because he was not a psychiatrist and primarily recognised for his human rights work.

Alongside these bulletins, the Working Group also published special reports on psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union. The first of these special reports was a pamphlet entitled, *The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals*. This was released in 1971 shortly after the Bukovsky papers had been received and translated by the Working Group. This pamphlet contained remarkably detailed reports on individual cases of psychiatric abuse, including General Pyotr Grigorenko, Natalya Gorbanevskaya and Olga Iofe. It also contained the text of Bukovsky's appeal to Western psychiatrists as a set of appendices.[401] The level of detail given in this publication is remarkable given that it was published in 1971, some five years before significant action from either the Royal College or the WPA on the matter. This demonstrates the quality of information that this group had access to, most likely through the personal connections of prominent members such as Reddaway. This illustrates both the expertise that the Working Group had amongst its membership and the links it held with the Soviet Union to attain this information. Another example of the Working Group's special publications is *The Political Abuse of Psychiatry in the Soviet Union*, published to coincide with the WPA congress in Honolulu in 1977. This report also demonstrates the expertise present in the Working Group, with this publication more closely resembling an academic paper rather than a press release from a human rights group.[402] This academic influence can be clearly seen in both the terminology and linguistic style used and the extended use of references throughout.

Alongside the publication of news bulletins and other materials, the Working Group was also involved in organising public meetings of psychiatrists and concerned individuals. At the WPA congress in Honolulu, the Working Group, in collaboration with a French organisation, arranged a

[401] Mee, *The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals*.
[402] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *The Political Abuse of Psychiatry in the Soviet Union* (London, 1977).

'Special Extra-Congress Meeting on Psychiatric Abuse of Political Purposes'.[403] This was organised to coincide with the international gathering of psychiatrists at the WPA congress, attempting to gain as large an audience as possible. This event sought to 'inform both congress participants and the press about the issues' regarding the Soviet abuse of psychiatry.[404] This can be seen as an effort by the Working Group to not only influence the direction of the WPA and its participants, but also to take the occasion of the media's attention on this conference and highlight the Soviet abuses.

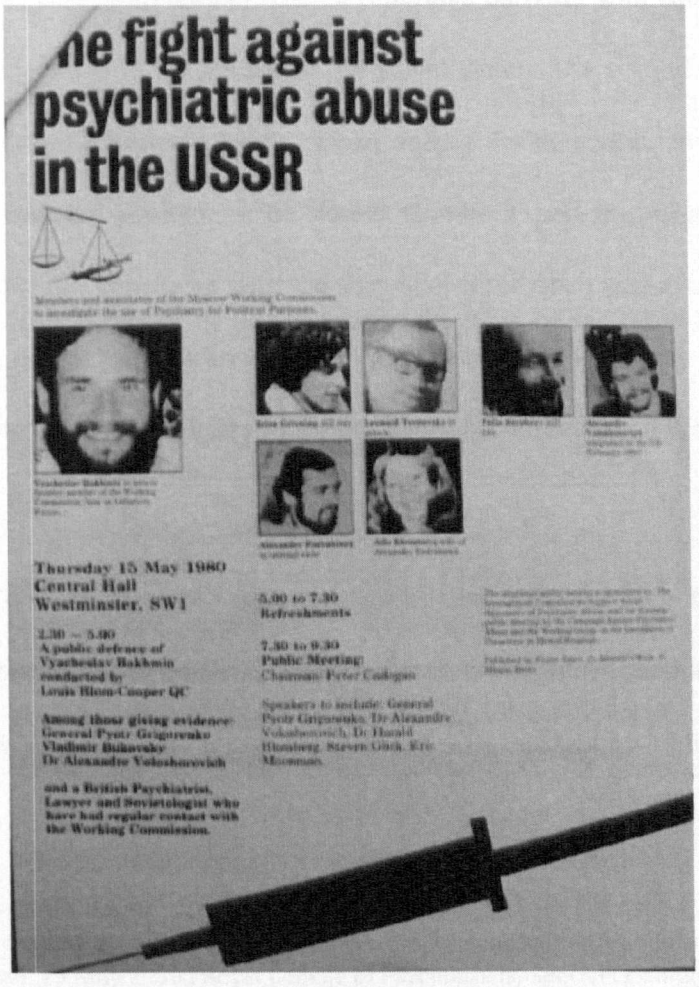

Image 2.1 – 'The Fight Against Psychiatric Abuse in the USSR'. Poster advertising the joint public event held by the Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals and the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse (CAPA) in London on 15 May 1980.

[403] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977, p. 8. The name of this French Committee is not given in this bulletin, although is noted as being headed by Dr J.-P. Descombey, and being organised by the group's secretary Martine Le Guay.

[404] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 1, June 1977, p. 8.

Another example of a public event orchestrated by the Working Group occurred in London on 15 May 1980. This was a series of three events held at the Central Hall, Westminster. The first of these was a public hearing on the cases of Vyacheslav Bakhmin, Leonard Ternovsky and Viktor Nekipelov. This was effectively a kind of public trial of these dissidents, at which translations of letters of support from concerned Soviet citizens were read.[405] Alongside these statements, evidence was given at this 'trial' by General Petro Grigorenko, Vladimir Bukovsky and Aleksandr Voloshanovich, three influential figures regarding the Soviet abuse of psychiatry.[406] The event was chaired by Louis Blom-Cooper, Q.C., a reputable barrister who was keenly involved in supporting victims of human rights abuses in the Soviet Union. The second event was a public meeting at which several renowned figures spoke on the Soviet abuses, including Grigorenko, Voloshanovich, the Swedish psychiatrist Dr Harold Blomberg, and the former Labour MP Eric Moonman. Thirdly, this day concluded with the signing of three open letters to prominent figures in the Soviet Union, registering concern at the plight of Bakhmin, Ternovsky and Nekipelov, and calling for their release.[407] A publicity poster for this event produced by the Working Group can be seen in Image 2.1.

This event, and the array of renowned figures that attended drew the attention of the media, with *The Times* reporting particularly on the involvement of Grigorenko.[408] The prominent scientific journal *Nature* also ran a short report on the mock trial, noting that the Soviet

[405] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, 'Report on London Meetings on Soviet Psychiatric Abuse, 15 May 1980', Royal College of Psychiatrists, Special Committee on the Unethical Practice of Psychiatry: Soviet Union Papers (hereafter RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union) The SCPAP was later renamed SCOUPP, and archival material for this committee is held under its later name. Translated statements by Irina Grivnina, Yury Yarym-Agayev, Lyudmila Ternovskyaya, Felix Serebrov and 23 other citizens, and Serebrov, Sofia Kalistratova and Maria Petrenko-Podyapolskaya (jointly) were read at this public hearing and are listed in full in RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

[406] 'The Fight against Psychiatric Abuse in the USSR', RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union. Voloshanovich was a Soviet psychiatrist who had emigrated from the Soviet Union and had been heavily involved with the Moscow 'Working Commission', who reported incidence of psychiatric abuse.

[407] Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, 'Report on London Meetings on Soviet Psychiatric Abuse, 15 May 1980', RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union. These open letters were sent to 1) the Moscow City Procurator, 2) the head of the Vladimir Region KGB, and 3) Felix Serebrov of the Moscow Working Commission, notifying him of the meeting and the two previous letters. Each letter received over 100 signatures.

[408] 'General Grigorenko tells of Soviet wave of arrests', *The Times*, 16 May 1980, p. 7.

authorities appeared to be sensitive towards allegations of psychiatric abuse.[409] However, developments in the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the boycott of the West German athletics team from the 1980 Moscow Olympics dominated the news on the day following this event, perhaps diluting the media's reporting of it.[410]

This all day event brought together several different groups and individuals concerned with the political abuse of psychiatry, along with those who had first hand experience of these abuses. The aims of such an event are difficult to define, but it could be argued that it sought to form both a media spectacle so that reports on the psychiatric abuse were made in the national press, and to galvanise those in Britain who worked to put pressure on the Soviet authorities. Whilst this event did not produce the media spectacle that it originally sought to produce, owing in part to other international events, it brought activists together. In the context of the Cold War this was increasingly important, and this event may have reignited a sense of passion in this work in those who attended. Whilst the Working Group did not manage to gain the attention of the media in the same manner as other organisations working in this period, such as the 35's, there was little else that it could do to gain public attention given its remit and reputation. By working with other concerned organisations in this manner, the group was able to gain public attention about psychiatric abuse, and to present its information to a wider audience. This approach only worked due to the wider network of human rights activists that had developed in the course of the 1970s, and allowed the Working Group to participate in public protests whilst maintaining their academic credibility.

Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse

The events of May 1980 were organised by the Working Group in conjunction with the Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse (CAPA). CAPA was an off-shoot of the Working Group that

[409] V. Rich, 'Soviet Psychiatry: Mock Trial in London', *Nature*, Vol. 285, 22 May 1980, p. 185.
[410] See N. Davies, 'Germans to stay away from games', *Daily Mirror*, 16 May 1980, p. 2; D. Howell, 'The real heart of Britain', *Daily Mirror*, 16 May 1980, p. 31; M. Hornsby, 'Mr Muskie dismisses Afghan offer on Soviet Withdrawal', *The Times*, 16 May 1980, p.1; and P. Clough, 'West Germans decide to boycott Olympics', *The Times*, 16 May 1980, p.1.

formed in September 1975 to take a more direct approach to the campaign against Soviet abuses. Chaired by Dr Henry Dicks, it became actively involved in public events and demonstrations. CAPA was largely driven by Victor Fainberg, a dissident who had been incarcerated in a *psikhushka* prior to his exile to Britain in October 1974.[411] Fainberg took an active role in the British movement campaigning against the psychiatric abuses, and went on later to marry Marina Voikhanskaya, a former Soviet psychiatrist who had emigrated to Britian. Voikhanskaya and Fainberg's marriage was widely reported in the British press due to their background, described by some as being like a tragic Russian novel. Malcolm Stuart wrote a lengthy piece on their story in *The Daily Mail*, which referred to them as 'the couple that beat Russia's mind-benders'.[412] *New Psychiatry* also wrote at length about the background of Voikhanskaya and Fainberg, taking a more scientific approach to their story.[413]

Voikhanskaya worked in the Leningrad Ordinary Psychiatric Hospital (OPH) when she became aware of the political abuse of psychiatry, seeing that the internment of the artist Yury Ivanov was unjust as she felt he did not suffer from mental illness.[414] She personally intervened in the cases of Ivanov and Fainberg, offered her personal support to them, and actively prevented the harshest of psychiatric treatments.[415] She was ostracised by other psychiatrists at the Leningrad OPH for her involvement with these dissenters, and for her wider activity in the human rights movement, and in April 1975 she emigrated to the United Kingdom. This emigration was not as smooth as she expected, with her nine year old son Misha being refused permission to join her abroad, something that she felt was a punishment directly related to her comments on Soviet psychiatry made after her emigration.[416]

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[411] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 328.
[412] M. Stuart, 'Reunited – the couple that beat Russia's mind-benders', *The Daily Mail*, 14 April 1975, p. 19.
[413] S. Shafar, 'The Disease of Dissent', *New Psychiatry*, 17 July 1975 pp. 12-13.
[414] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 231. For more on Voikhanskaya's experiences in the Soviet Union see M. Voikhanskaya, 'Psychiatry betrayed', *New Psychiatry*, 21 July 1975, pp. 10-11.
[415] Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, p. 289.
[416] P. Nobile, 'From Lonely Exile, Soviet Dissident Marina Voikhanskaya Begs, 'Please Give Me Back My Son'', *People*, Vol. 9, No. 17, 1 May, 1978, available at: http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20070731,00.html (Accessed 8 October 2010).

Image 2.2 CAPA Misha Voikhanskaya campaign leaflet, Date approximately early 1976.

CAPA campaigned explicitly for Misha to be reunited with his mother, gaining the support of a number of notable figures including the playwright Tom Stoppard and the musician Yehudi Menuhin. Misha was eventually allowed to emigrate from the Soviet Union in April 1979, along with his grandmother Leah Friedlender, and join his mother in Britain.[417] Misha's emigration was widely reported in the British press. Interestingly, his case was used by Michael Cummings, a cartoonist for the Daily Express, to attack James Callaghan as being controlled by communists. Image 2.3 satirises Misha's arrival in Britain, being highly critical of Callaghan's links to communists. That Misha's case is being used in such a manner illustrates that it would have been well known amongst *Daily Express* readers in order for this cartoon to make sense.

[417] For details of this, see CAPA newsletter May 1979,CAPA Collection, IISG.

Image 2.3 "Welcome! But you must be very sure of a victory for Mrs Thatcher!", Michael Cummings, *Daily Express*, 27 April 1979

CAPA's aims were much like most human rights groups working for Soviet dissidents in Britian in the 1970s, essentially to do all they could to put an end to the Soviet abuses. In their campaign material they set themselves the following four main aims:

1. To investigate the abuse of psychiatry for the purposes of State wherever it may occur
2. To publicise the use of psychiatric methods for political repression
3. To bring about the release of sane persons interned in mental hospitals because of their political, ethical or religious beliefs.
4. To eradicate these evil practices completely and forever.[418]

CAPA collated information on the political abuse of psychiatry, and publicised this material through a variety of media outlets and at public events. Publicity was essential to their campaign, noting in a campaign leaflet that 'CAPA members assist in the vitally important task of making the public aware of the political abuse of psychiatry and the plight of individual prisoners of conscience in psychiatric hospitals'.[419] This publicity leaflet also illustrated the role that CAPA members felt they occupied. At the top of this leaflet, as shown in Image 2.4 is a picture of

[418] Membership leaflet enclosed in *CAPA News*, No. 2, Spring 1977, CAPA collection, IISG
[419] 'CAPA NEEDS YOU!!' Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse publicity leaflet, date unknown. CAPA collection IISG.

workers assisting people out of a prison. This image clearly illustrates the active role that CAPA members felt they played, in literally dragging dissidents out of prison and comforting them. This extremely proactive approach to their campaigns can also be seen in the strikingly bold aims noted by the organisation, which are clearly highly ambitious. These two examples are indicative of the more publicly demonstrative approach that CAPA took to its campaigning compared to the Working Group.

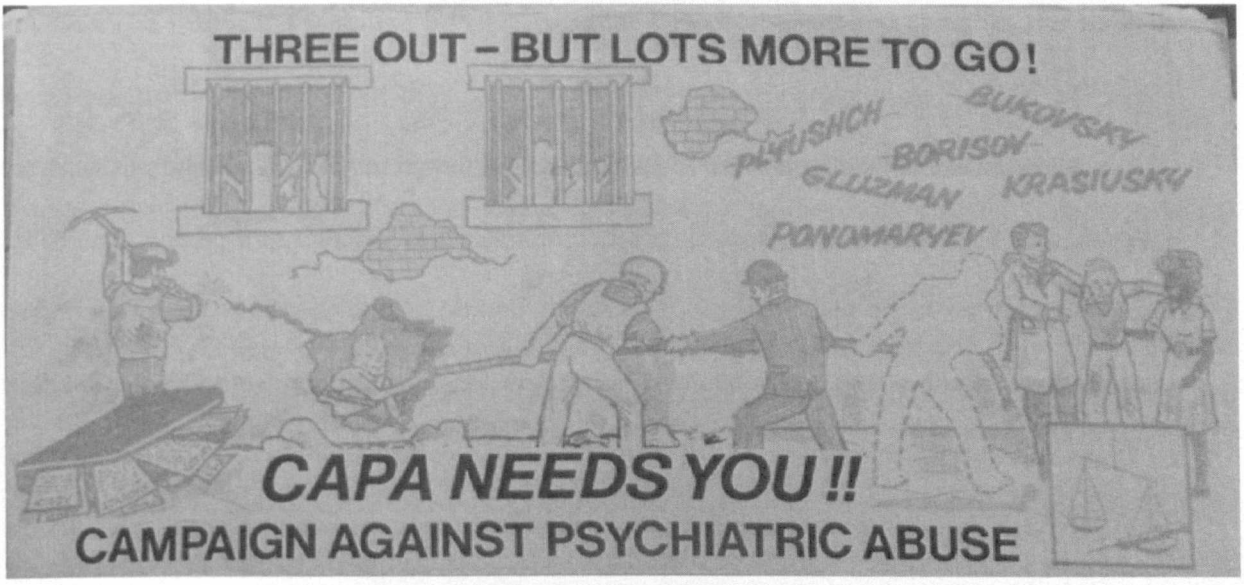

Image 2.4 CAPA NEEDS YOU!! Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse publicity leaflet.

Other public events conducted by CAPA included a 48 hour vigil of fasting and prayer on 14 July 1978, sponsored walks, and more conventional demonstrations at Soviet exhibitions.[420] CAPA also ran a flying squad of activists in London who were ready to demonstrate at very short notice.[421] The flying squad were involved in protests outside Wembley Stadium during a display by Soviet gymnasts, and at an performance by a Soviet singer at Wigmore Hall, where Victor Fainberg took to the stage before the encore began and gave a speech on Soviet psychiatric abuses.[422] The Working Group would have been unable to conduct such events given the academic and scientific nature of its working and its reliance on the reputation of these

[420] For details of these events see CAPA newsletter, June/July 1978,CAPA Collection, IISG; CAPA newsletter April/May 1978; and CAPA Newsletter, May 1979, CAPA Collection, IISG.
[421] CAPA newsletter, September 1978, CAPA Collection, IISG.
[422] CAPA newsletter, February 1979, CAPA Collection, IISG.

individuals. CAPA therefore made the most of these opportunities to highlight the psychiatric abuses in the Soviet Union, using more traditional demonstration techniques.

On 20 December 1980, the Working Group joined with activists from France, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands to form the International Association on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry (IAPUP).[423] CAPA later joined IAPUP in the summer of 1982, reuniting with the Working Group.[424] Allan Wynn attributes the formation of this organisation to the efforts of Peter Reddaway in taking the initiative bringing together European groups working on the issue of Soviet psychiatric abuse so that they could speak with a more united voice.[425] IAPUP still exists today as an organisation promoting the ethical practice of psychiatry, and is now known as GIP.[426] IAPUP was not an international organisation in the traditional sense. Instead, it was simply a confederation of concerned bodies; something which had a significant effect on the workings of the group. IAPUP meetings were notably lengthy for several reasons. Firstly, the array of different languages meant that communication between parts of the organisation was often slower than it would have been within a national body. Secondly, because there was no need to reach consensus amongst all affiliate members of IAPUP, meetings essentially revolved around the need to persuade others, which led to lengthy and sometimes heated discussions.[427]

The news bulletins started by the Working Group in 1977 were replaced with IAPUP bulletins, with the group producing a more regular publication from May 1981 onwards. The decision to combine the Working Group's news bulletin with IAPUP was communicated to its supporters in a letter dated June 1981. As well as notifying this merger, this letter is also full of thanks for the financial support given to the Working Group from its members.[428] The IAPUP

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[423] Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness*, p. 44; and IAPUP Information Bulletin No. 1 (May 1981). The founding organisations that merged to form IAPUP were the Swiss Association against Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, the Working Group, the Committee of French Psychiatrists against the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, the German Association against Political Abuse of Psychiatry, and the International Podrabinek fund (Netherlands).

[424] L. Jacob, 'Letter to CAPA members and friends' August 1982, CAPA Collection, IISG.

[425] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator,* p. 114.

[426] For more information on GIP, see http://www.gip-global.org/ (Accessed 30 December 2010).

[427] Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness*, p. 63.

[428] Letter to Supporters of the Working Group from Peter Reddaway and Ian Forster, a member of the Working Group, dated June 1981, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

bulletins contained more in the way of up to date information than the Working Group bulletins, producing a piece that was more akin to traditional reports from human rights organisations. However, apart from direct reference to the activity of human rights groups in continental Europe, and reports on the activities of the constituent bodies of IAPUP, there is little difference between the Working Group bulletins and the first set of IAPUP bulletins. This is perhaps due to the fact that Reddaway and Christine Shaw continued their work on the Working Group bulletins into the IAPUP bulletins.[429] The bulletins continued to outline the latest information received on cases of psychiatric abuse within the Soviet Union, and the response of international organisations such as the WPA to the abuses. The most notable difference about these bulletins compared to those of the Working Group is the reporting of these issues from a pan-European position rather than solely from a British perspective. This illustrates the shifted base of support from these two organisations. By the 1980s, IAPUP was better positioned to place pressure on international organisations such as the WPA than national organisations could ever be.

After the formation of IAPUP in 1980, the efforts of the Working Group did not cease. The efforts of the Working Group were regularly reported in a dedicated section of the IAPUP bulletin which discussed the activity of its regional members. From 1980 to 1983, these bulletins stress that the role of the Working Group was mainly to increase publicity of the abuses in the Soviet Union through articles in the mainstream and scientific press, and appearances on television documentaries.[430] The Working Group also became particularly involved in highlighting the abuse of two Soviet miners Alexei Nikitin and Vladimir Klebanov, and urged the National Union of Miners (NUM) to become involved in supporting this case.[431] Given the power that the NUM held in the 1980s, culminating in the nationwide miners strike from 1984-85, this was perhaps a

[429] The editorship of both Working Group and IAPUP bulletins are not mentioned in the publications themselves, although Allan Wynn suggests that the reason for the high quality of IAPUP bulletins from their origin is due to the 'extraordinary care and attention devoted to them by the principal editors, Peter Reddaway, and later, Dr Christine Shaw'. (Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 116.) Given the similarity in style between the Working Group and IAPUP bulletins, and the involvement of both Shaw and Reddaway in the Working Group, one can assume that they were involved in both publications.
[430] See IAPUP Information Bulletin, No. 3 (English edition), March 1982; IAPUP Information Bulletin, No. 4 (English edition), June 1982, p.7; and IAPUP Information Bulletin, No. 5 (English edition), October 1982, p. 9.
[431] IAPUP Information Bulletin, No. 2 (English edition), October 1981, p. 11.

shrewd move by the Working Group, hoping to gain a widespread audience for these abuses through the trade union movement.

From 1983 to 1985, reporting of the work of constituent members of IAPUP ceases to appear in its bulletins. Arguably, this was initially due to the AUSNP's withdrawal from the WPA in 1983, which prompted IAPUP to focus their attentions on the implications of this event rather than the work of their constituent members. The Working Group responded to the AUSNP's withdrawal from the WPA with the following statement given by Allan Wynn,

> The Working Group sees the move as a tacit admission that political psychiatry has been practiced in the USSR and as a sign that the new Kremlin leadership may have taken the first steps to abolish this perversion of medicine. The Group believes that the process of abolition will take place gradually and unobtrusively and will take some time as structural and personnel changes will be necessary. It hopes that when the process is complete, the AUSNP will be re-admitted to the WPA.[432]

This statement clearly signifies that the Working Group considered the AUSNP's withdrawal as a sign that the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union was coming to an end. The change of political leadership after the death of Brezhnev in 1982 was seen to have prompted this change. Much like the exchange of Bukovsky in 1976, this withdrawal was also taken as a sign that psychiatric abuses had occurred. Importantly, the Working Group statement recognises that there were an array of bureaucratic changes needed in the Soviet Union to fully eradicate this form of abuse, and that the AUSNP should be welcomed back into the WPA once these changes had taken place. This illustrates that the Working Group wanted Soviet psychiatry to be represented and involved in international movements, arguably hoping that this withdrawal would be the start of a new period of Soviet psychiatry.

After 1983, the activity of the Working Group clearly receded. It appears to have maintained its relationship with the SCPAP, sending information to the committee on 10 January and 26 February 1984, but other than this its activism ceases.[433] This decline in activism was

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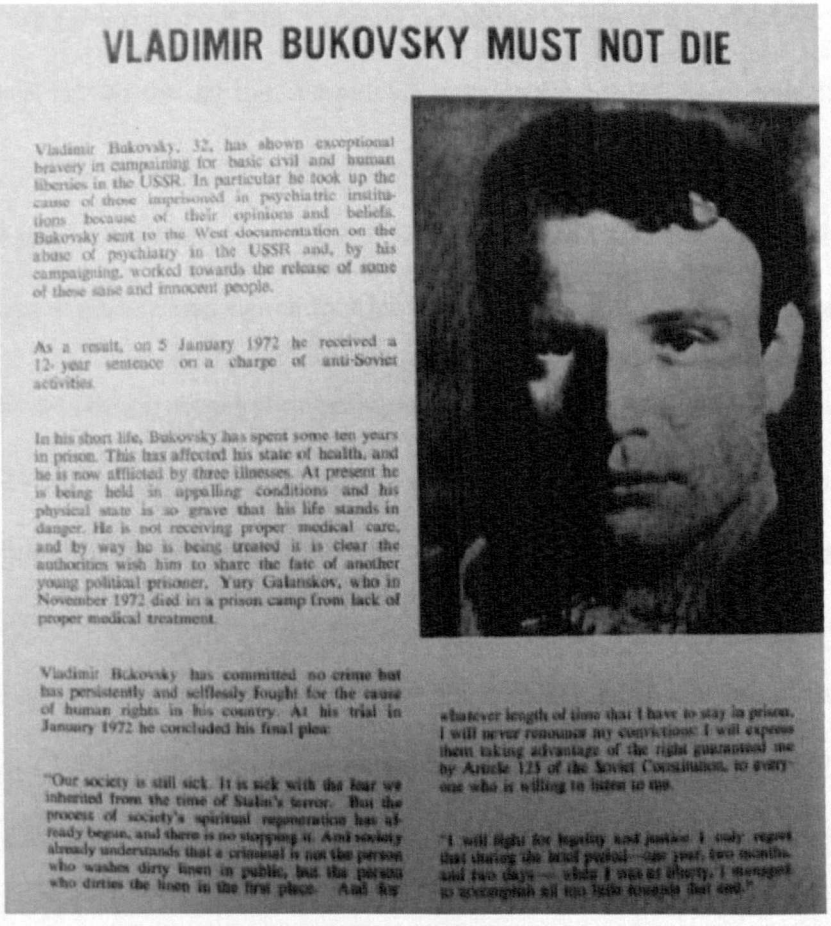
[432] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 121.

[433] See Letter to Peter Sainsbury from Fiona Anderson dated 26 January 1984, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; and Letter to Peter Sainsbury from Fiona Anderson dated 10 February 1984, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

arguably due to the fact that other organisations, such as the Royal College and the WPA had recognised the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union and were now working to combat it. After the AUSNP withdrew from the WPA in 1983, there was little that organisations such as the Working Group could do to speed this process up other than maintaining links with organisations and sharing information. Indeed, after the WPA congress in Vienna in 1983, the purpose of the Working Group had ceased to exist. Reddaway's emigration to the United States in 1985 effectively brought an end to the Group. His efforts had kept the organisation alive in the mid-1970s, and although he was very rarely mentioned in the Working Group publications, it is clear that he was the major driving force behind the group's work.

Campaigns for individual dissidents



VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY MUST NOT DIE

Vladimir Bukovsky, 32, has shown exceptional bravery in campaining for basic civil and human liberties in the USSR. In particular he took up the cause of those imprisoned in psychiatric institutions because of their opinions and beliefs. Bukovsky sent to the West documentation on the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR and, by his campaigning, worked towards the release of some of these sane and innocent people.

As a result, on 5 January 1972 he received a 12-year sentence on a charge of anti-Soviet activities.

In his short life, Bukovsky has spent some ten years in prison. This has affected his state of health, and he is now afflicted by three illnesses. At present he is being held in appalling conditions and his physical state is so grave that his life stands in danger. He is not receiving proper medical care, and by way he is being treated it is clear the authorities wish him to share the fate of another young political prisoner, Yury Galanskov, who in November 1972 died in a prison camp from lack of proper medical treatment.

Vladimir Bukovsky has committed no crime but has persistently and selflessly fought for the cause of human rights in his country. At his trial in January 1972 he concluded his final plea:

"Our society is still sick. It is sick with the fear we inherited from the time of Stalin's terror. But the process of society's spiritual regeneration has already begun, and there is no stopping it. And society already understands that a criminal is not the person who washes dirty linen in public, but the person who dirties the linen in the first place. And for whatever length of time that I have to stay in prison, I will never renounce my convictions. I will express them taking advantage of the right guaranteed me by Article 123 of the Soviet Constitution, to every one who is willing to listen to me.

"I will fight for legality and justice. I only regret that during the brief period—one year, two months and two days — while I was at liberty, I managed to accomplish all too little towards that end."

Image 2.5 – Committee for the Release of Vladimir Bukovsky, 'Vladimir Bukovsky Must Not Die – Campaign Leaflet'

One interesting aspect of the British response to Soviet psychiatric abuse are the sporadic groups formed to gather support for one particular dissident. The Committee for the Release of Vladimir Bukovsky is a good example of this. This committee formed in 1971 after Bukovsky's appeal about psychiatric abuse was sent to the West. This committee, which had links to Amnesty International, essentially formed to raise public awareness about Bukovsky's plight in the Soviet Union, and was a vehicle with which to unite those who protested on his behalf. The campaign itself was led by David Markham, the English actor, who also played an active role in CAPA.[434] The Committee for the Release of Bukovsky managed to draw a number of prominent cultural figures from British society, including Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Eva Figes, Iris Murdoch and 22 members of the Royal Shakespeare Company as supporting petitioners to the campaign.[435] The support of these cultural figures in these campaigns was significant, as it not only lended their personal reputations to the campaign itself but it greatly raised the profile of the dissident in question. A similar tactic was carried out by the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry (the 35's) and other Jewish groups in their campaign on behalf of Anatoly Shcharansky. In 1977, these Jewish groups took out a full page advertisement on the 6 October copy of *The Times*, in which nearly two thousand prominent citizens had signed their public support to a campaign for his release.[436]

Another interesting aspect about campaigns for individual dissidents that were subjected to psychiatric abuse is how they could bring together all different aspects of the human rights movement in Britain. The campaign for Dr Semyon Gluzman, for example, brought together a variety of different British human rights groups and activists. Gluzman was a Soviet psychiatrist who was sentenced to seven years of hard labour and three years of exile for his stand against psychiatric abuse.[437] He wrote a highly critical report on the psychiatric diagnosis of General Petro Grigorenko and Leonid Plyushch, and co-authored 'A Manual on Psychiatry for Dissenters' with

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[434] Committee for the Release of Vladimir Bukovsky, 'Vladimir Bukovsky Must Not Die', MRC, MSS.34/4/1/USSR/17.

[435] Committee for the Release of Vladimir Bukovsky, 'Vladimir Bukovsky Must Not Die', MRC, MSS.34/4/1/USSR/17. Date of publication unknown, presumed sometime between February and December 1975.

[436] See. Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 100.

[437] For details on Gluzman's activities see Bloch and Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals*, pp. 234-238.

Vladimir Bukovsky. This manual on psychiatry circulated widely in *samizdat* and gave explicit information on how dissidents could defend themselves against accusations of insanity whilst in a *psikhushka*.[438]

Amnesty International, CAPA, the 35's and the Working Group sponsored a meeting at Conway Hall, Holborn, London in November 1979 that called for freedom for all victims of Soviet psychiatric abuse under the banner of 'Freedom for Gluzman' as shown in Image 2.6. The coordinated involvement of these groups is perhaps unsurprising; Amnesty, CAPA and the Working Group all had clear concerns about the psychiatric abuses. The involvement of the 35's is, on face value, more unclear. This can be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the fact that Gluzman is Jewish meant that the 35's felt a connection for religious reasons. Secondly, there was a good working relationship between Bukovsky, one of the speakers at this event, and the 35's. Bukovsky became involved with the 35's campaign that called for athletes to boycott the 1980 Olympic games in Moscow and may have subsequently become involved in their other campaigns.[439] It is also interesting to note the involvement of prominent individuals from human rights groups, such as Sidney Bloch and Marina Voikhanskaya from the Working Group and David Markham from CAPA took such a prominent, and shared role in speaking at this event. This meeting, and others like it, brought these people into a working relationship with other groups, such as the 35's and Amnesty. The way in which these groups operated together on the Bukovsky and Gluzman campaigns is indicative of the wider network of Soviet human rights activism present in Britain in this period.

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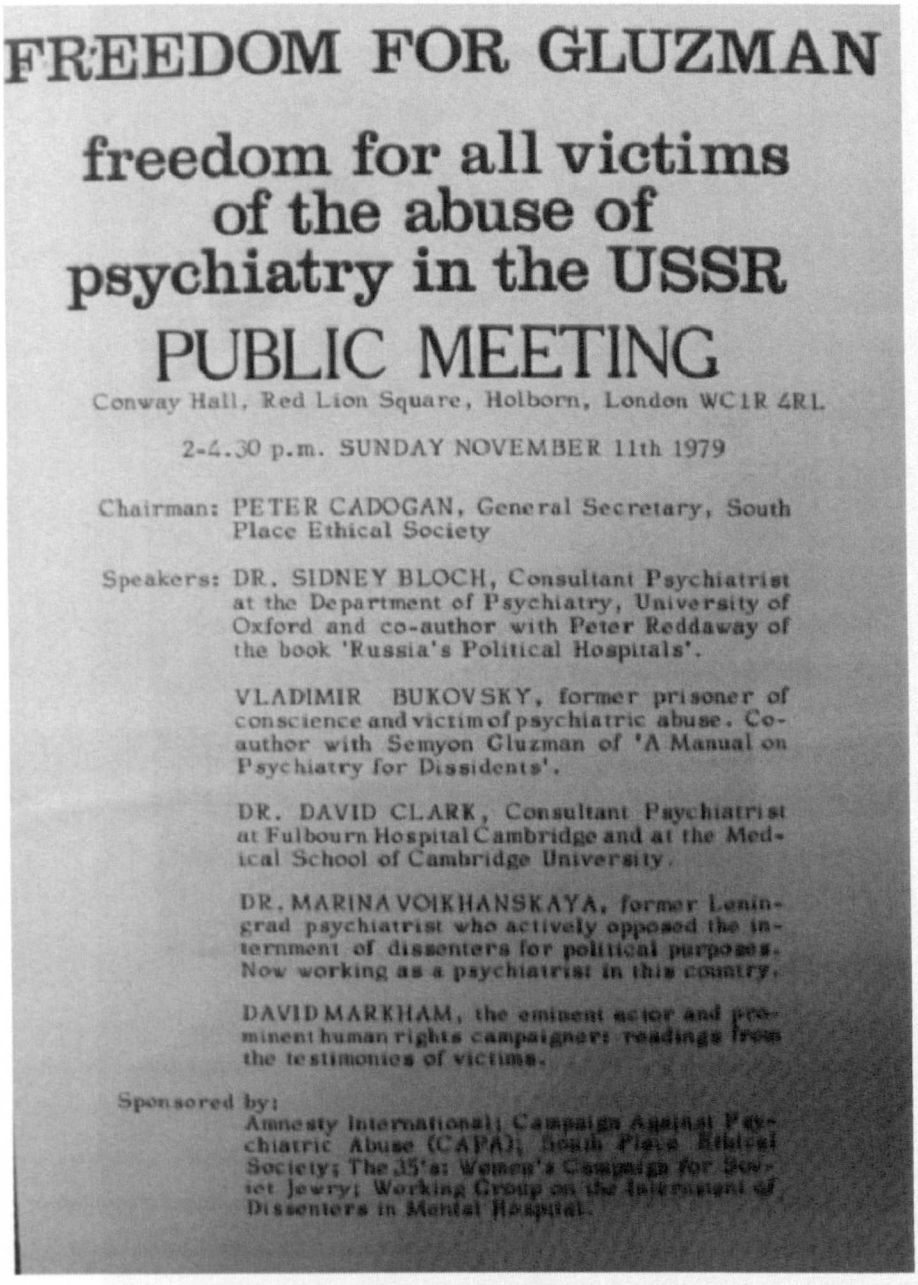
[438] Wynn, *Notes of a Non Conspirator*, p. 31-32, 88. A copy of the Manual on Psychiatry for Dissenters is available [in Russian] at http://antology.igrunov.ru/authors/bukovsky/psychiatr.html (Accessed 8 October 2010), and in an English translation as Appendix I in H. Fireside, *Soviet Psychoprisons* (Toronto, 1979) pp. 92-118.

[439] Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism', p.465.



FREEDOM FOR GLUZMAN

freedom for all victims of the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR

PUBLIC MEETING

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1R 4RL

2-4.30 p.m. SUNDAY NOVEMBER 11th 1979

Chairman: PETER CADOGAN, General Secretary, South Place Ethical Society

Speakers: DR. SIDNEY BLOCH, Consultant Psychiatrist at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford and co-author with Peter Reddaway of the book 'Russia's Political Hospitals'.

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY, former prisoner of conscience and victim of psychiatric abuse. Co-author with Semyon Gluzman of 'A Manual on Psychiatry for Dissidents'.

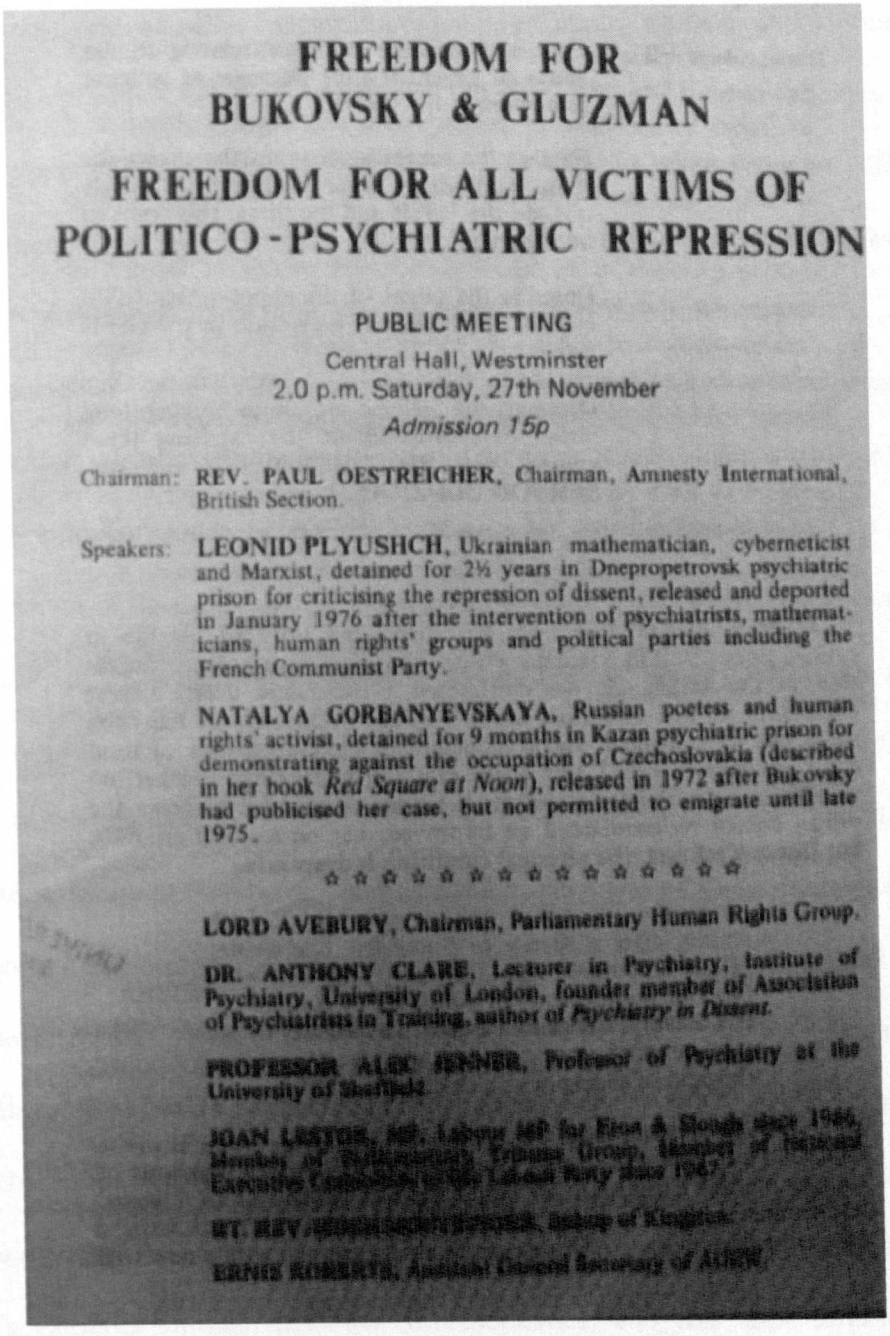
DR. DAVID CLARK, Consultant Psychiatrist at Fulbourn Hospital Cambridge and at the Medical School of Cambridge University.

DR. MARINA VOIKHANSKAYA, former Leningrad psychiatrist who actively opposed the internment of dissenters for political purposes. Now working as a psychiatrist in this country.

DAVID MARKHAM, the eminent actor and prominent human rights campaigner: readings from the testimonies of victims.

Sponsored by:
Amnesty International; Campaign Against Psychiatric Abuse (CAPA); South Place Ethical Society; The 35's: Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry; Working Group on the Internment of Dissenters in Mental Hospital.

Image 2.6 –Freedom for Gluzman: Freedom for all victims of the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR – public meeting leaflet (Date of publication unknown, probably October 1979).



FREEDOM FOR
BUKOVSKY & GLUZMAN

FREEDOM FOR ALL VICTIMS OF
POLITICO-PSYCHIATRIC REPRESSION

PUBLIC MEETING

Central Hall, Westminster
2.0 p.m. Saturday, 27th November
Admission 15p

Chairman: **REV. PAUL OESTREICHER**, Chairman, Amnesty International, British Section.

Speakers: **LEONID PLYUSHCH**, Ukrainian mathematician, cybernetic and Marxist, detained for 2½ years in Dnepropetrovsk psychiatric prison for criticising the repression of dissent, released and deported in January 1976 after the intervention of psychiatrists, mathematicians, human rights' groups and political parties including the French Communist Party.

NATALYA GORBANYEVSKAYA, Russian poetess and human rights' activist, detained for 9 months in Kazan psychiatric prison for demonstrating against the occupation of Czechoslovakia (described in her book *Red Square at Noon*), released in 1972 after Bukovsky had publicised her case, but not permitted to emigrate until late 1975.

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LORD AVEBURY, Chairman, Parliamentary Human Rights Group.

DR. ANTHONY CLARE, Lecturer in Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry, University of London, founder member of Association of Psychiatrists in Training, author of *Psychiatry in Dissent*.

PROFESSOR ALEX KERNER, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Sheffield.

JOAN LESTOR, MP, Labour MP for Eton & Slough since 1966, Member of Parliamentary Human Rights Group, Member of National Executive Committee of the Labour Party since 1967.

RT. REV. [illegible], Bishop of Kingston.

ERNIE ROBERTS, Assistant General Secretary of AUEW.

Image 2.7 – Freedom for Bukovsky and Gluzman, Freedom for all victims of politico-psychiatric repression (Date of publication unknown, probably November 1976).

Another example of this networking of groups can be seen in an earlier gathering, which called for freedom for both Gluzman and Bukovsky as shown in Image 2.7. This meeting was primarily organised by Amnesty International in collaboration with a variety of other smaller groups. These groups are vastly different in size, scope and aims. They range from Amnesty International to the Committee for the Release of Vladimir Bukovsky, a much smaller single issue group. Also included in this list are several overtly politically motivated groups (London Liberal

Party, Young Liberals, and an array of localised London Labour Parties) and a religious organisation (Christian Prisoners Release International). This assortment of groups appears to be deeply unwieldy, given different political and institutional motives. This array of different thoughts, ideologies and directions can also be seen in the impressive list of prominent individuals that supported this meeting, coming from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. These ranged from the comedian Spike Milligan, the Bishop of Southwark, Mervyn Stockwood and several MPs from differing parties. Although there were an array of individuals, it is clear that if one could attribute an overall ideology to those involved with these events it would be left of centre. The involvement of figures such as the renowned Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm and the Marxist political scientist Ralph Miliband alongside an array of liberal and Labour groups highlight the left-wing heart of these campaigns. However, the diverse background of these supporters suggests that the unifying concern of these individuals and groups was human rights, and an anxiety about the life of a particular individual. Although this is perhaps an obvious point to raise, it is important to note given the context of the Cold War. Human rights groups in this period were open to accusations of ideological and anti-Soviet bias, and in some cases even accused of inventing dissidents in order to attack the Soviet Union. For example, Peter Reddaway was accused by the journalist D. A. N. Jones of inventing the dissident Andrei Amalrik, claiming that there was no proof of his existence. This is something that Reddaway 'took him to task' over, proving Amalrik's existence through personal correspondence, and was later confirmed by Amalrik's emigration in 1976.[440] These predominantly left-wing campaigns show the discontent with Soviet Socialism that was present in Britain in the 1970s, and the concern about the abuse of human rights.

When the cooperation evident in these public events is taken into context with the correspondence and personal links between these groups and individuals, it is clear that there was a set of entrenched links between these human rights activists. Whilst this thesis has set out the activities of each organisation as distinct and separate from other organisations in order to

[440] See D.A.N. Jones 'Siberian Trip', *The Spectator,* 26 November 1970, p.843. and Interview with Peter Reddaway, 5 July 2010.

create a narrative that is easy to follow, this is a simplistic approach that does not fully account for the overlapping between these organisations. The approach taken by this chapter has sought to introduce the main framework of the British response to the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, within which these interrelations can be seen. Indeed, it would be impossible to introduce the multifaceted relationship of these British groups without covering them separately. The one-off events for Bukovsky and Gluzman noted above are among the most explicit demonstration of these links. However, there are more subtle areas where the activities of different organisations overlap. The activism of individuals such as Peter Reddaway, Gery Low-Beer, Sidney Bloch, Harold Merskey and Vladimir Bukovsky, as discussed above, created explicit links between human rights organisations. The work of these individuals, and the overlapping influences of British human rights groups means that contrary to the segmented approach that this piece might have suggested, the reality is that there was a clear network of human rights activists that worked to highlight the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. The differences on paper between these groups appear to have meant very little to the individuals involved with these organisations.

Royal College of Psychiatrists

One of the major purposes of the human rights groups discussed above was to publicise the Soviet abuse of psychiatry to a wide audience, and to get official bodies to react to the information that they distributed. In the 1970s, the most body petitioned by these groups was the Royal College of Psychiatrists, who played a prominent role in the campaign against the Soviet abuses. The Royal College is the central professional body for psychiatry in Britain, that actively monitors and promotes a high standard of psychiatric treatment in both Britain and throughout the world. As a Royal College, it enjoys an influential reputation amongst both psychiatrists and governments internationally.

The Royal College first dealt with the reports of the political abuse of psychiatry in 1973 when Dr Gery Low-Beer and Professor Harold Merskey moved a motion at a Quarterly Meeting of

the Royal College calling for a condemnation of the reported abuse. This motion was first put forward in the Spring of 1973 receiving only a quarter of available votes in support. However, due to the mass publicity given to the accusations of Soviet abuses in the Summer of 1973, including an array of articles in *The Times*, the same motion was passed with a healthy majority at the Autumn meeting of the Royal College.[441]

The change of heart in the membership of the Royal College was also arguably due to the public criticism of the delegates it sent to WPA meetings in Yerevan, Armenia; and Tbilisi, Georgia. David Carver, the General Secretary of International PEN, was particularly scathing of the Royal College in a letter to *The Times* in August 1973, which noted the hypocrisy of their membership in officially denouncing the abusive practice of Soviet psychiatrists whilst at the same time meeting with them at professional conferences. Carver makes particular reference to the WPA co-sponsored symposium on schizophrenia which was held at the Serbsky Institute in October 1973 at which a number of British psychiatrists were to deliver papers.[442] Given the role that psychiatrists from the Serbsky played in the abuse of psychiatry, the apparent political manipulation of the diagnosis of schizophrenia, and the notoriety that this *psikhushka* gained, attending symposia here was particularly insensitive. In response to Carver's accusations, the Royal College registrar, Morris Markowe, responded that 'it is not for this Royal College to decide whether individual psychiatrists should present papers at this or any other symposium' and reiterated that the Royal College was greatly concerned at the political abuse of psychiatry.[443]

The official condemnation of Soviet abuses by the membership of the Royal College led Sir Martin Roth, President of the Royal College, to write a telegram to the leaders of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the AUSNP on 9 November 1973. This telegram, which is included in full in Appendix 2, noted the Royal College's concern at the reports of the political

[441] Letter from Harold Merskey to Marie Girard, 9 January 2008, p. 1. Telephone interview with Harold Merskey, 22 October 2010. For examples of these articles and letters see B. Levin, 'Cries for help that go unheeded', *The Times*, 14 June 1973, p. 16; K. Coates and C. Farley, D. Green, A. C. Woodmansley, M. Own, 'Incarceration of Russian Writers', *The Times*, 1 September 1973, p. 13; 'Ten Jews held after Moscow protest', *The Times*, 3 October 1973; and 'Western psychiatrists pay visit to Gen Grigorenko', *The Times*, 16 October 1973, p. 11.

[442] D. Carver, 'Soviet Writers in Mental Hospitals', *The Times*, 27 August 1973, p. 7.

[443] M. Markowe, 'Soviet Writers in Mental Hospitals', *The Times*, 30 August 1973, p. 15.

abuse of psychiatric treatment in 'various countries', noting an appreciation that 'reports on such matters are liable to some distortion'. This telegram called for an impartial commission, made up of psychiatrists of high repute from a number of countries to investigate these claims.[444] This telegram is particularly important as it illustrates the Royal College's explicit concern about the abuse of psychiatric treatment, and the urgency needed to protect the 'good name of psychiatry the world over'. The need to protect their subject is something that clearly drove many psychiatrists involved with campaigns against the Soviet abuses.

What is notable about this telegram, and the letter to *The Times* by Markowe is the lack of direct reference to the reports of Soviet abuses. In particular, if one were to read the telegram to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the AUSNP without contextual knowledge, it would be difficult to draw the conclusion that this document was part of an attempt to place pressure on the Soviet authorities. Indeed in the early 1970s, references to the political abuse of psychiatry from the Royal College are often made in these couched terms, despite the accusations against the Soviet Union being public knowledge. This was perhaps due to the same reasons that the WPA were initially reluctant to publicly criticise the Soviet Union on the basis of allegations without sufficient evidence. The Royal College may have wanted to maintain the links that it held with Soviet psychiatrists, something that might explain its approach to WPA conferences in Tbilisi and Yerevan.

The Royal College's efforts to put pressure on those engaged in the unethical use of psychiatry were greatly increased and became more explicit five years after this original condemnation of Soviet abuses when it formed the SCPAP in June 1978. The SCPAP was a small committee, comprising no more than eight individuals at any one time, who met on a regular basis to discuss information the Royal College had received about the political abuse of psychiatry. This committee played a large role in deciding the response of the Royal College towards the Soviet abuses, and the President of the Royal College Professor Kenneth Rawnsley

[444] Copy of Telegram sent to Dr A. Freedman of the APA and Prof. A. Snezhnevsky of the AUNSP, 9 November 1973, RCPsych, SCOUPP Soviet Union.

regularly attended the SCPAP meetings.[445] The SCPAP was particularly influential on the Royal College's response to the Soviet authorities, and in its interactions with the AUSNP. In some instances, SCPAP members drafted letters to be sent on behalf of either the President or the Royal College which appear in most cases to have been sent unaltered. An example of this can be seen in the minutes of the first SCPAP meeting on 26 July 1978 in which the draft of a letter to Snezhnevsky is quoted in full. SCPAP members drafted and approved this letter which was to be sent to the AUSNP on behalf of the Royal College, suggesting the element of control that they had over issues of psychiatric abuse from their foundation.[446] The SCPAP was chaired from its inception to 1987 by Dr Peter Sainsbury, an esteemed psychiatrist with a reputation for his rigorous use of empiricism in psychiatry.[447] The SCPAP reported directly to the Council or the Executive and Finance Committee of the Royal College, illustrating the importance of its role and its link with the central body which ran the Royal College.

The foundation of the SCPAP in 1978 is perhaps of little surprise. The previous year can be seen as a watershed moment in Western understanding of, and concern about the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. 1977 held an array of key events for the development of British discourse on these abuses, including the fall out and response to Bukovsky's exile in late 1976; the exile of Petro Grigorenko in December 1977; and the WPA congress in Honolulu at which the subject of Soviet abuses dominated. Indeed, the fallout from the WPA congress alone meant that the Royal College needed to formulate their approach to this issue, and other unethical practices of psychiatry. The SCPAP was a formal way of doing this, and its formation dealt with the concerns of members of the Royal College. Sidney Levine, a member of the SCPAP, even suggests that the committee was formed at the request of various 'informed organisations' such as Amnesty International and the Working Group. Levine notes that these organisations approached the Royal College, requesting that it respond to the ever growing number of cases of abuse that were being

[445] See SCPAP attendance records 1978-1985, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes 1978-93.
[446] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 26 July 1978, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes 1978-93.
[447] J. Jenkins, 'Obituary: Peter Sainsbury', *The Guardian*, 24 February 2004, available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2004/feb/24/guardianobituaries.obituaries (Accessed 10 January 2011); and R. Rathod, 'Peter Sainsbury', *British Medical Journal*, No. 328, (2004) p. 1442, available at http://www.bmj.com/content/suppl/2004/06/10/328.7453.1442-e.DC1 (Accessed 10 January 2011).

reported in the West.[448] That these human rights organisations had an influence on the creation of this committee is telling of the later relationship that they were to have with the SCPAP, and of the role that these groups were to play in how the committee operated.

The remit of SCPAP was clearly set out in the minutes of its first meeting on 26 July 1978, which noted that the 'Special Committee should consider all reports of the political abuse of psychiatry wherever it might occur'.[449] It is important to note this international focus, as a cursory glance at the SCPAP papers might give the impression that this group was formed solely to consider the reports of abuse in the Soviet Union given the frequency of discussion in this area. In the context of the Cold War, this international focus was particularly important, as it would have been easy for the Soviet authorities to accuse the SCPAP of being an ideologically biased group. Taking this into account, it is perhaps a little surprising that the SCPAP was not publicly dismissed as an anti-Soviet organisation.[450] Although the SCPAP was arguably formed primarily to investigate the Soviet abuses of psychiatry, it does not appear to have been formed with a particular anti-Soviet position. Although the meetings of SCPAP from 1978 to 1983 were dominated by discussion of the Soviet Union, this is due predominantly due to the type, scale and inimitable character of the Soviet abuse of psychiatry. The Soviet abuses were unique in this period due to their political nature compared to other countries where abuses were not as centrally driven. Although the work of SCPAP in this period was dominated by a focus on the Soviet Union, abuses in other countries were discussed by this committee. For example, reports of Japanese psychiatric abuses were discussed at the SCPAP meeting on 2 October 1985; concerns at South African psychiatrists colluding with apartheid were discussed in October 1984; and reports of abuse in Argentina and Chile were discussed at a 1981 meeting.[451]

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[448] S. Levine, 'The Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry', *Psychiatric Bulletin*, Vol. 5 (1981) p. 94.

[449] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 26 July 1978, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes 1978-93.

[450] For an example of this see letter to Peter Sainsbury from J. Pollert, dated 29 April 1982, RCPsych, SCOUPP Soviet Union.

[451] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 2 October 1985, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes; Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 25 October 1984, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes; and Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 15 July 1981.

David Cohen was particularly critical of Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway for referring to the Soviet abuses as the 'shadow over world psychiatry', noting that similar abuses occurred elsewhere in the world but were comparably underreported. Cohen contends that there were many other 'shadows' in world psychiatry, noting the example of 221 psychiatric patients who had died in the Utsonomiya Hospital in Japan under suspicious circumstances that suggested there had been psychiatric abuse.[452] He argued that it was convenient for Western commentators to treat the Soviet abuses as being unique, and by highlighting the political aspect of this abuse it served as a vehicle to challenge the 'particular evil' of the Soviet situation.[453] Given the political nature of the Soviet abuses compared to other international abuses, it is doubtless that the Soviet case was unique. This is illustrated by the SCPAP's predominant focus on the Soviet abuses in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The SCPAP was not a body that was biased against the Soviet Union in this period, the fact is that an apparent bias only existed because of the unique and extreme system of abuse that existed in the Soviet Union. This is supported by comments made in the October 1980 News Bulletin of the Working Group. This bulletin noted that 'apart from in Rumania, and to some extent in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and East Germany, political abuse of psychiatry does not seem as yet to be a widespread phenomenon outside the USSR'.[454] This bulletin also referred to the reports of abuse in Argentina and South Africa, concluding that after investigation they did not produce 'clear-cut cases of psychiatry being used to suppress dissent'.[455] The SCPAP's focus on the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union was due to circumstance, not ideological bias.

One of the main activities of the SCPAP was its interaction with the WPA review committee. This committee was created by the WPA at the 1977 congress in Honolulu in response to reports of Soviet psychiatric abuse. This committee was designed to examine all complaints regarding psychiatric abuse that were sent to the WPA, and to forward their recommendations to

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[452] For details of these Japanese Psychiatric abuses see Cohen, *Forgotten Millions,* pp. 57-85.
[453] Cohen, *Soviet Psychiatry,* p. 52-53.
[454] Working Group on the Interment of Dissenters in Mental Hospitals, *News Bulletin on Psychiatric Abuse in the Soviet Union*, No. 3, October 1980, p. 2.
[455] Ibid, p. 2.

the WPA executive committee.[456] The review committee was to become the key point of contact between national psychiatric organisations and the WPA regarding psychiatric abuse. It was effectively a passageway for which evidence of abuses could be sent to the WPA via concerned psychiatric bodies. Details of the cases received by the Review Committee are documented in the WPA publication *The Issue of Abuse*, which was published in January 1983. This document outlines in detail the role of the Review Committee, and extensively lists cases that were brought to its attention by national psychiatric organisations.[457] The formation of the SCPAP was an effective way for the college to gather concerned members together to compile this information to be sent to the WPA.

The SCPAP papers suggest that there was a regular flow of information from the committee to the WPA review committee, with an array of materials and correspondence being sent between the two groups.[458] The formation of the Review Committee meant that the main interaction that the SCPAP was to have directly with the WPA was in the supply of information about cases of abuse. Like most campaigns on behalf of Soviet dissidents in this period, this distribution of information was at the centre of both the SCPAP and the WPA discussions about abuses. This was to have a dramatic effect on the role of human rights groups who supplied information to the SCPAP, as it meant that this evidence was not only to be consulted by members of the Royal College but potentially also by the WPA.

The minutes of the first meeting of the SCPAP clearly note the relationship that the committee was to have with other organisations concerned with the political abuse of psychiatry in this period, with members agreeing that it should hold no formal links with other

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[456] For details on the WPA review committee see A. Wynn, 'The Soviet Union and the World Psychiatric Association' *The Lancet*, 19 February, 1983 pp. 406-408; and Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the WPA held in Marrakesh, Morocco on 31 October 1983, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

[457] WPA, *The Issue of Abuse: 1970-1983* (1983).

[458] For examples of this correspondence see letter from Professor Berner (WPA Review Committee) to Royal College of Psychiatrists, dated 15 February 1983, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; letter from Professor Rawnsley to Professor Berner dated 13 December 1982, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; Letter to Royal College of Psychiatrists from WPA Review Committee (author unknown) dated October 1981, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; and letter from Professor Gosselin (WPA Review Committee) to Professor Pond dated 30 January 1981, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

organisations.[459] The initial desire to not engage in formal links with human rights organisations was perhaps in an attempt to avoid tarnishing the reputation of the Royal College, which it must be noted was an organisation with an international membership keen on promoting scientific links with a variety of nations, including those in the Soviet bloc. However, in reality the links between the SCPAP and human rights organisations became clear – particularly in the cases of Amnesty International and the Working Group.

The SCPAP regularly asked for details on particular victims of psychiatric abuse from Amnesty International, and notably used personal relations with human rights organisations to attain the latest information from the Soviet Union. A good example of this is the letter from Peter Sainsbury to Marjorie Farquharson, a member of Amnesty's International Section, dated 5 May 1982. This letter not only asked for the latest information that Amnesty had on three Soviet dissidents, but it also suggested that a member of Amnesty's staff act as a Liaison Officer between the SCPAP and Amnesty.[460] This letter reveals several things about the relationship between the SCPAP and Amnesty. Firstly, the fact that the SCPAP made a request for regular information from Amnesty illustrates that its reports were trusted by the Royal College. Had there been elements of doubt about the reliability of this information, it is unlikely that these requests would have been made. Secondly, the fact that a request was made for the establishment of a coordinating officer between the two organisations clearly shows the frequency with which they dealt with each other. Attempts to make this link more efficient suggest not only the importance with which SCPAP members placed on Amnesty reports, but also that they wished for this relationship to be maintained in the long term. This was perhaps due to the desire to maintain the flow of reliable, and up to date information that the Royal College could not provide in the same manner as Amnesty. The establishment of an official link between the SCPAP and Amnesty is a clear indication of how important the wider network of activists that had developed in the 1970s was,

[459] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 26 July 1978, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.
[460] Letter to Marjorie Farquharson from Peter Sainsbury, dated 5 May 1982, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

and how an official body such as the Royal College was keen to utilise this network in their own work.

The SCPAP were also regularly asked by human rights campaigners to use their position to petition the AUSNP on behalf of specific victims of abuse. The most frequent example of this in the SCPAP papers is from the Amnesty member, Enid Nussbaum. Nussbaum, a member of the Keele and North Staffs Amnesty Group, was in regular contact with the SCPAP about the plight of Nikolai Baranov from 1980 onwards. Her letters to the SCPAP are a mixture of requests for information, translated documents from Baranov or his close family and friends, and appeals for action from the Royal College.[461] These letters can be seen to have had two main purposes. Firstly, to ensure that the SCPAP and the Royal College paid attention to the plight of Baranov, a prisoner of conscience adopted by Nussbaum's local Amnesty group. Secondly, this was another example of the flow of information, with the SCPAP recognised by some as being a reputable source of information on the Soviet abuses, and a group that could act on information given to them.

The SCPAP also held very close links with the Working Group, most notably with individuals holding positions in both organisations. Both Sidney Bloch and Gery Low-Beer were prominent members of both bodies. Perhaps more importantly, both were very active members of the SCPAP, with high attendance at meetings and apparent keen involvement in the actions of the group. Low-Beer in particular appears to have been one of the most active members of the SCPAP, who regularly wrote draft letters on behalf of the committee and acted as the committee's expert on Soviet affairs.[462] For example, Low-Beer drafted a letter to the Soviet authorities on behalf of the SCPAP, protesting against the treatment of members of the Moscow

[461] For an example of these letters see Letter from Enid Nussbaum to Peter Sainsbury, dated 9 January 1981,; Letter from Enid Nussbaum to Peter Sainsbury, dated 12 October 1981; Letter from Peter Sainsbury to Enid Nussbaum, dated 8 March 1982; Letter from Enid Nussbaum to Peter Sainsbury, dated 17 March 1982,; Letter from Enid Nussbaum to Peter Sainsbury, dated 4 February 1983; and Letter from Enid Nussbaum to the SCPAP, dated 24 October 1983, all from RCPsych, SCOUPP Soviet Union.

[462] For examples of Low-Beer's activity see Amnesty International, *Political Abuse of Psychiatry in the USSR: An Amnesty International Briefing* (Date Unknown – probably early 1980s), RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; Letter to Gery Low-Beer from Peter Sainsbury, dated 8 March 1982, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; and Letter to Professor Desmond Pond (President of Royal College of Psychiatrists) from Gery Low-Beer, dated 5 November 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

Working Commission who were documenting and reporting of Soviet abuses. This draft was sent to Professor Desmond Pond, the president of the Royal College, asking him to sign this petition, which had been printed on College paper, and send it to the Soviet authorities.[463] This is a direct instance where the words of a leading member of a human rights organisation became the official output of the Royal College, clearly illustrating the influence that this group held. The efforts of these two individuals in the SCPAP timed with their direct involvement with the Working Group inevitably meant that the relationship between these two organisations was heightened.

Another member of the Working Group who had influence on the SCPAP was Peter Reddaway. Alongside his work for Amnesty as the editor of the *Chronicle of Current* Events, Reddaway's influence both as an academic and with his association with the Working Group were felt on the SCPAP due to the regular correspondence that he held with the committee's chair, Peter Sainsbury. Reddaway was in regular contact with the SCPAP and the Royal College, and provided them with the most up-to-date information that he had on abuses in the Soviet Union.[464] This was something that was gratefully received by members of the SCPAP, and Peter Sainsbury regularly thanked Reddaway for sharing information on Soviet dissenters with the Royal College.[465]

The supply of information to the SCPAP put Reddaway in an interesting position. Given that the response of the Royal College to reports of psychiatric abuse was driven by information, Reddaway's correspondence and materials had a substantial impact on the direction of the committee. When this is placed in the context of the personal relationships he held with SCPAP members such as Sidney Bloch and Gery Low-Beer, it becomes apparent that his influence was felt on the committee itself. For example, on 20 August 1979, Reddaway sent a letter to Peter Sainsbury noting that 'it is growingly important to maintain steady and strong pressure on the

[463] See letter to Professor Desmond Pond from Peter Sainsbury dated 31 October 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

[464] For examples of this correspondence see Letter to Peter Reddaway from Jane Manley (Royal College Secretary) dated 15 May 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; Letter from Peter Reddaway to Jane Manley dated 20 March 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; Letter from Peter Reddaway to Peter Sainsbury dated 19 February 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union; and Letter from Peter Sainsbury to Peter Reddaway dated 6 September 1979, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

[465] Letter to Peter Reddaway from Peter Sainsbury dated 8 April 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

Soviets and to encourage the WPA to take the same line'.[466] Although this was the approach of the SCPAP and the Royal College at the time, Reddaway's recommendations are indicative of the input on the direction of the SCPAP that he had.

Another example of this occurred in March 1979 when he asked Peter Sainsbury to forward copies of the original Russian information bulletins produced by the Working Commission to the WPA. Whilst this in itself was not an unusual request, especially not in the context of shared information in which these groups operated, the detail with which Reddaway goes into on how to send these materials is impressive, outlining the exact procedure for submitting these materials to the WPA.[467] This can be seen as Reddaway utilising the reputation of the Royal College in order to send information to the WPA. A request from the Royal College would inevitably carry more weight than a personal request from Reddaway. By asking Sainsbury to forward these materials to the WPA for him demonstrates how Reddaway used his relationship with members of the committee to ensure that the WPA paid full attention to this information. In this case, the relationship between Reddaway and the SCPAP was a mutually exclusive one, with both sides gaining favourably – the SCPAP with the most up-to-date information and expertise, and Reddaway with an extra avenue with which to put pressure on the Soviet authorities. What this relationship does reveal is that links developed between human rights activists and the SCPAP despite the insistence at its foundation that this was not to be the case. Relationships with human rights organisations were too useful for the SCPAP not to make advantage of them.

The influence of human rights activists on the SCPAP and the Royal College came to the fore in the run up to the 1983 WPA congress at Vienna. Shortly before this event, the AUSNP withdrew from the WPA in response to allegations of the widespread political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. This withdrawal can be understood to have been the Soviet attempt to save face, by leaving the WPA rather than being expelled by it. After the resolutions passed at the 1977 WPA congress in Honolulu, and the unanimous adoption of the so-called 'Declaration of Hawaii'

[466] Letter to Peter Sainsbury from Peter Reddaway dated 20 August 1979, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.
[467] Letter to Peter Sainsbury from Peter Reddaway dated 26 March 1979, RCPsych, SCOUPP: Soviet Union.

which codified international ethical guidelines for the psychiatrists to abide by, it was increasingly likely that the AUSNP would have been expelled from the WPA at the 1983 congress.[468] Withdrawing from the committee before this seemingly inevitable expulsion was a way in which the AUSNP were seeking to save face.

Before the AUSNP's withdrawal from the WPA, the Royal College had written to Andrey Snezhnevsky in 1978 asking him to explain the reports of psychiatric abuse that had reached the West from the Soviet Union.[469] Snezhnevsky's response to the Royal College was considered unacceptable, and the President of the College, Professor Desmond Pond wanted to take firm action on the matter and asked the SCPAP for their advice.[470] SCPAP members appear to have agreed with Pond's concern as legal action was taken to start the process to remove Snezhnevsky from his position as a Corresponding Fellow of the College. The fact that Pond consulted the SCPAP before this process started illustrates the key position that they held within the college on issues regarding the Soviet Union. The process to remove Snezhnevsky from his honorary position at the Royal College was in an attempt to place pressure on the Soviet authorities by exerting political leverage against the AUSNP, humiliating its most respected member by expelling him from his honorary position at this prestigious research institution. This was one of the only ways in which the Royal College could exert direct pressure on the AUSNP and leading Soviet psychiatrists. Snezhnevsky resigned from his position at the Royal College in April 1980, shortly before his case was to be heard at the College's Court of Electors.[471]

Gery Low-Beer argued that the Royal College should make the most of this incident by releasing a public statement welcoming Snezhnevsky's resignation. This, however, did not happen. Snezhnevsky's resignation from the Royal College was given minimal publicity, something which some SCPAP members agreed was unfortunate.[472] The failure to effectively publicise this

[468] For the text of the Declaration of Hawaii see 'World Psychiatric Association: The Declaration of Hawaii, *Psychiatric Bulletin*, Vol. 2 (1979) pp. 12-13.
[469] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 26 July 1978, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.
[470] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 28 March 1979, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.
[471] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 16 April 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.
[472] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 29 October 1980, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.

resignation meant that little pressure was placed on the Soviet authorities. This could have been a potentially internationally embarrassing event, and tantamount to an admission from Snezhnevsky that the accusations of psychiatric abuse from the Royal College were true. The lack of publicity given to this event is attributed by the SCPAP minutes to some members of the Royal College's council who did not want to give this case any publicity.[473] This suggests that even though the SCPAP had a large influence over the output of the Royal College, its output was still controlled by its council. Although the suggestions of the SCPAP were on the whole accepted and taken up by the College, this incident suggests that this committee was not in complete control of its output.

The SCPAP's response to the AUSNP resignation was one of reorganisation. It was clear that the official work conducted by the committee in working against Soviet psychiatric abuse had come to an end. The AUSNP's withdrawal from the WPA was a tacit admission by the Soviet authorities that this abuse had taken place, and without this institutional link there was little that the Royal College could do to pressurise the Soviet authorities. Without threat of expulsion from the WPA, the Royal College no longer had a powerbase with which to put pressure on the AUSNP. The initial reaction to the AUSNP's resignation was one of frustration. SCPAP minutes note that Sidney Levine was concerned that little publicity had been given this resignation, and that Low-Beer was worried that the resolutions that were to be presented at the WPA condemning the Soviet practice would be nullified. It would have been technically impossible to condemn the actions of an ex-WPA member.[474] However, on the whole the reaction to this resignation from SCPAP members was a positive one. The committee agreed that the furore that surrounded the AUSNP and the WPA would make it more difficult for Soviet authorities to utilise psychiatric abuse as a way of controlling dissenters. It also called for renewed relationships with individual

[473] Ibid.
[474] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 24 February 1983, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.

psychiatrists in the Soviet Union, who would be professionally affected by the AUSNP's withdrawal by being scientifically isolated from the international psychiatric community.[475]

It could be argued that given the efforts of the SCPAP in campaigning for the expulsion of the AUSNP from the WPA, once this had been completed, there was little that the SCPAP could officially do. Its direct affiliation to the Royal College meant that the traditional activism of human rights groups, such as demonstrations and petitions to the Soviet authorities were both inappropriate and impossible. Due to this, the 1983 WPA congress in Vienna can be seen to be a turning point in the work of the SCPAP, something that it recognised in a meeting on 24 May 1983. The minutes of this meeting note that lengthy discussion took place on the remit of the committee, with members examining how its purpose should be amended. It was agreed that the scope of the SCPAP should be extended, and that 'the Russian issue' would 'have to be left to a certain extent'.[476] It was also agreed that the committee could not open itself to consider all cases of human rights abuse, and that all cases that it considered should, in some way, concern psychiatry. After the 1983 WPA congress, the role of the SCPAP appears to be diluted. SCPAP minutes from 1983 to 1985 highlight that the committee's work had shifted to focusing on building relations with other bodies, such as the APA, IAPUP and Amnesty. In accordance with its new position, it more extensively considered the reports of psychiatric abuse from other countries such as Japan, South Africa and Uruguay.[477] The new role of the SCPAP even took on discussion of domestic policy, which included the diagnosis of the 'Yorkshire Ripper', Peter Sutcliffe.[478]

Even by 1985, the SCPAP was still questioning its purpose and direction, with Sidney Levine questioning whether the committee should simply react to reports of abuse that it

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[475] Ibid.

[476] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 24 May 1983, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes. Section E contains a report of the discussion of SCPAP's remit.

[477] For examples, see Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 2 October 1985, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes; and Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 21 September 1983, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.

[478] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 11 January 1984, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes. Peter Sutcliffe was convicted of the murder of 13 women in 1981, and one of the most infamous British serial killers.

received or if should be more pragmatic and adopt a 'grander strategy'.[479] Once the AUSNP had left the WPA, the role of the SCPAP in the fight against psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union was over. It had successfully brought international attention to the Soviet abuses through the WPA, and as a result the impetus for putting pressure on the Soviet authorities now had to come from this body.

The role played by human rights groups in both the composition and content of the work of the SCPAP is striking, particularly given the important role that the committee played in the Royal College's approach to the Soviet abuse of psychiatry. It is clear that without the direction of human rights activists, the SCPAP would have taken a vastly different approach to this problem, and would have undoubtedly been a markedly different group. It is not an overstatement to note that human rights activists from groups such as CAPA, the MSCSJ and the Working Group did more than influence the SCPAP, they scripted the output of the committee, and subsequently that of the Royal College.

[479] Minutes of SCPAP meeting dated 27 February 1985, RCPsych, SCOUPP minutes.

Chapter 3

Religious Human Rights Groups

Two days before I was arrested, I called Avital and was bitterly disappointed that she had already left Jerusalem for Geneva. Her supporters assured me they were working in my behalf, but I was so upset that I neither understood nor appreciated what they were telling me. Little did I know that an international movement working for my release had already begun, a movement that ultimately involved tens of thousands of people around the world, including students and housewives, of course, but also lawyers, scientists, politicians, and many more. It would take another book just to thank them all.[480]

Anatoly Shcharansky, *Fear No Evil*

The definition of a dissident in the Soviet context was wide reaching. Religious believers were targeted by the Soviet authorities as political dissenters due to the state promotion of atheism, which meant that religious belief was actively suppressed.[481] Displays of religious belief in the Soviet Union were very dangerous for individuals. Many suffered directly as a result of their faith, being demoted in their employment or even losing their jobs altogether. In extreme circumstances, religious believers were imprisoned in labour camps for their resistance to the attempts of Soviet authorities to crush their faith.[482] Some were even diagnosed with mental illnesses due to their religious faith, and placed in *psikhushki* until they renounced their beliefs.[483]

Separation of religion and state was an important part of state policy from the beginnings of the Soviet Union, when Lenin noted that he felt that religion should be a private affair and of no concern for the party or the state.[484] This process of separation of church and state accelerated under Lenin's successors, something that developed into the direct persecution of religion under Stalin and Khrushchev. Khrushchev's anti religious policy was particularly virulent, with mass

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[480] Shcharansky, *Fear No Evil*, p. 420.

[481] See J. Von Geldern, 'Conflict with the Church' at Seventeen Moments in Soviet History (Available online at http://www.soviethistory.org/index.php?page=subject&SubjectID=1917church&Year=1917 accessed 16 August 2010).

[482] For example, see Shcharansky, *Fear No Evil*.

[483] Van Voren, *Cold War In Psychiatry*, p. 374.

[484] V. Lenin, 'Socialism and Religion', *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 28, 3 December 1905, (Available online at Marxists Internet Archive - http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1905/dec/03.htm accessed 16 August 2010).

closure of places of worship and attacks on religious believers.[485] The persecution of religious believers continued under Brezhnev, predominantly with the rise of the *refusenik* problem who were often persecuted on the trumped up charge of knowledge of state secrets. *Refuseniks* were frequently persecuted by the Soviet authorities, losing their jobs and being harassed for their attempts to emigrate.

Religion played a significant part in the dissident movement in the Soviet Union. The persecution of faith by the Soviet authorities forced religious groups into secret organisations who formed underground churches to keep their faith alive. Some scholars have argued that religious dissent had a significant part to play in the collapse of the Soviet Union, with religious belief and moral conscience shaping the actions of many dissenters.[486]

In response to this suppression of religious belief, many groups were formed around the world to petition the Soviet authorities, supply aid and religious materials to believers in the Soviet Union, and distribute information about the persecuted to the media and governments in Western nations. Human rights groups had the position to shape not only public awareness of the plight of religious believers in the Soviet Union, but also the response of governments to their position.

This chapter will analyse the campaigns of the two most prominent British religious human rights groups formed in the wake of Soviet persecution in the later twentieth century: the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry and the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism, also known as Keston College. Both of these groups played an important role in increasing publicity for the plight of religious believers behind the Iron Curtain, and their campaigns had a direct influence on the public perception of Soviet dissenters in Britain. It shall take the campaigns of these groups in turn, illustrating how, despite their outward differences, these two

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[485] See N. Davis, 'The number of Orthodox Churches before and after the Khrushchev antireligious drive', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3, (1991) pp. 612-20; J. D. Grossman, 'Khrushchev's Anti-Religious Policy and the Campaign of 1954', *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, (1973) pp. 374-86; and A. B. Stone, '"Overcoming Peasant Backwardness": The Khrushchev Antireligious Campaign and the Rural Soviet Union', *The Russian Review*, vol. 67, No. 2, (2008), pp. 296-320.

[486] See Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia*.

organisations had much in common – something that undoubtedly contributed to the level of influence that they had on British society.

The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry

You and your organization have done wonders over the years, & I think (or hope, anyway) that you know how much I and people like me respect what you've done. I particularly admired it, when everyone else was falling over themselves to fawn over Mikhail Gorbachev when he came to Britain, you 35's kept up the pressure almost on your own. That took real guts; & yet now, some years later, it's quite clear that you were doing exactly the right thing. My hats off to you; it was courage and foresight like that which brought the old discredited Soviet Union to its grave.

John Simpson, BBC Foreign correspondant[487]

The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, also known as the 35's, were an unusual group to take a stand against the authorities of the Soviet Union.[488] With the vast majority of their membership comprised of upper middle class Jewish women, it would seem at first glance that their activities would have had little effect on the Soviet authorities. Yet despite this, some, including the prominent journalist John Simpson, have noted that their actions played a significant part in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emigration of thousands of *refuseniks* to Israel and other countries around the world. Given the praise heaped on the 35's by prominent individuals such as Simpson, it is surprising that their role has not been discussed in any depth in historical scholarship.

The only piece to date that has looked at this group is Daphne Gerlis' work *Those Wonderful Women in Black*.[489] Gerlis, a 35er herself, has produced a history of the organisation that has particular insight into the way in which its campaigns were run. This piece is richly coloured with a variety of reminiscences of the groups campaigns, and the relationship built up between activists and *refuseniks*. The bulk of information used by Gerlis in the production of this book came in the form of interviews with leading 35ers, which were unfortunately unrecorded.

[487] Letter from John Simpson to the 35's dated 12 September 1994, UofS MS 254/1/3/9.
[488] As a result of their nickname, members of the 35's are sometimes referred to as 35ers.
[489] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*.

Given the amount of literature on the persecution of Soviet Jewry, and on the wider Soviet dissident movement there is clearly a gap in the scholarship surrounding the role of Anglo-Jewish groups, and their response to the *refusenik* problem, which was an immensely complex issue covering religious, ethnic, and nationalist issues.[490]

This chapter will assess the activities of the 35's in the late twentieth century, and analyse the effect that they had on the wider British perception on the *refuseniks*. It will outline the work of the campaign, showing how it operated on a day to day basis and the manner in which they lobbied the Soviet authorities using archival material from the 35's collection held at the University of Southampton. This will build on the narrative foundation set by Gerlis, and offer a more analytical approach to the activities of the 35's, placing their efforts in the wider context of British human rights groups in this period. It will also seek to piece together the work of other authors who have briefly commented on the work of the 35's in different contexts, such as Lord Greville Janner and Howard Spier.[491] This will readdress the gap in the scholarship regarding the work of the 35's, bring together the various commentators on the group into a more coherent piece, and highlight the important role in the construction of the British discourse on *refuseniks* and other Soviet dissidents that the 35's played.

The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry was initially formed after a group of Jewish housewives in London responded publicly to the perceived lack of support for *refuseniks* from the established Jewish bodies in Britain. On 1 May 1971, these housewives attempted to deliver a petition to the Soviet ambassador in London, and held a hungerstrike on behalf of Raiza Palatnik an imprisoned *refusenik* from Odessa. When they contacted the press about their protest, this

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[490] The plight of the *refuseniks* can be considered as being an ethnic or nationalist issue rather than a purely religious issue given the secular nature of many *refuseniks*. Defining the *refuseniks* plight in solely religious or nationalist terms does not fully capture the reasoning for their struggle, which was more complex and due to a variety of factors. Indeed, the term *refusenik* should not be taken to give a direct political or religious stance, but as a more blurred term used to group together Soviet Jews who applied for exit visas. This thesis will consider groups who campaigned for the *refuseniks* as religious human rights groups in order to facilitate comparison to other religious human rights organisations from this period, and also in recognition of the common religious background of groups such as the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry and the *refuseniks* they supported.

[491] See Janner, *To Life!*, pp. 231 – 246; and H. Spier, 'The West European Approach to the Soviet Jewry Problem' in R. Freedman, (ed.), *Soviet Jewry in the 1980s: The Politics of Anti-Semitism and Emigration and the Dynamics of Resettlement* (London, 1989) pp. 97-114.

group of housewives noted that 'we are a group of thirty-five girls, demonstrating outside the Soviet Embassy for the release of a Jewish woman imprisoned because she wants to go to Israel. She is 35 years of age and we are here for 35 hours.' During one of the numerous calls to *The Daily Telegraph* with this message, Doreen Gainsford, one of the founding members of the group, overheard a man on the news-desk say 'it's those 35's again', and the numbers stuck.[492] Soon after this, the group referred to themselves as the 35's, which became a prominent feature on their letterhead, public handouts and on demonstration banners.

The 35's are best described as a collection of local campaigns, arranged around the work of a very active central group based in North London – much like the composition of Amnesty, but on a smaller scale. The relationship between the central London group and its regional counterparts was very informal and based predominantly on the spread of information. The central group offered facts in the form of a regular circular sent to regional groups and other interested parties, which contained details about the plight of specific *refuseniks*, noting any changes in their circumstance and any particular call for letters to be written. This circular encouraged the writing of letters to individual *refuseniks* on their birthdays in an attempt to inform them that their plight was recognised in the West. This was also highlighted on the yearly calendar produced by the Leeds 35's in the early 1980s, which noted the birthdays of all prominent *refuseniks*.[493] The loose relationship that existed between the central group and its periphery is perhaps a good indicator of the wider work of the campaign – keen to distribute information rather than control. There is no indication that the central office of the 35's in London sought to overrule the actions of a regional group, illustrating the autonomy that regional 35's had from their central office. Regional groups had the ability to use their own initiative in instigating campaigns and demonstrations in support of *refuseniks*.

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[492] For a good account of the origins of the 35's, see Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, pp. 26-31. In this account, Gerlis notes that Gainsford exaggerated the length of the protest from 24 hours in order to make a better story. See also interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010. Margaret Rigal has been the co-chairman of the 35's from 1978 to the present, and was directly in charge of the campaigns links with British MPs.

[493] Collection of Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Calendars from 1981 to 1985 produced by the Leeds 35's, UofS, MS 254/1/3/10.

Perhaps as a result of this autonomy, many active 35's groups formed throughout the country. Most notable of these were groups in Liverpool, Leeds and Bournemouth, who were very active in both demonstrations and petitions. Indeed, Margaret Rigal, co-chairman and Parliamentary contact of the central 35's group, recalled the need to have active regional 35's groups as appeals to MPs would carry more weight if they came from a group based in their constituency rather than a single appeal from a central office in London.[494] By the later 1980s the regional model of the 35's groups had expanded beyond British borders, with prominent groups formed in Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand and the US.[495] Like regional groups in the UK, these campaigns were autonomous from the efforts of the central London group. Although each of these groups was important in their own right, in order to maintain direction, this piece will focus primarily on the actions of the central body.

Key to the organisation and running of the central London office was a group of determined women, who were keen to spread information regarding the persecution of *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union. After its formation in May 1971, the 35's were led by Doreen Gainsford until her emigration to Israel in 1978. After Gainsford's emigration, the group came under the joint leadership of Margaret Rigal and Rita Eker, who still occupy the co-chairmen position of the 35's to this day. What is notable about the central organisation of the 35's is the collection of strong willed characters, who were willing to put a considerable amount of effort into promoting their cause. Indeed, the central body of women that ran the campaigns are particularly notable for their strong characters and determination. It would be most appropriate to describe this central group as a collection of impassioned individuals. Each of these key individuals was given a specific role in the central office. Doreen Gainsford was the general administrator of the group till her emigration to Israel; Margaret Rigal was the Parliamentary contact; Rita Eker was in charge of office administration, and played a substantial part in the creation of new campaigns and demonstrations; Rosalind Gemal was the Trade Union contact;

[494] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[495] Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Admin – list of international contacts dated June 1988, UofS, MS 254/1/4/1,

and there were a variety of other different positions. People were even allocated to reading newspapers to pick out stories of interest and maintaining books of press cuttings much like the larger human rights organisations from the time.[496] This level of organisation was essential for the 35's to operate as they did and highlights that this was anything but an amateur organisation. Efficiency was essential for the group given the amount of material that they dealt with, something that can be seen in the size of remaining archival material.

The central offices used by the 35's were donated by charities who no longer required or could use them. These gifted offices were often left in an appalling condition, and too small for the requirements of the campaign.[497] Indeed, it is impressive that the 35's managed to work as effectively as they did out of offices that were in such a state of disrepair. Nevertheless, the 35's could not afford to complain at these gifts and made use of all the space they could for their materials. So much so that toilets were often used as storage cupboards. However, given the condition of these offices this use of space backfired when a flooded toilet caused irreparable damage to materials and photographs of demonstrations.[498] This incident illustrates some of the basic difficulties that the 35's had in their day-to-day running, which stemmed primarily from a lack of space and supplies. Other factors that hampered the workings of the group were repeatedly broken office equipment and poorly maintained photocopiers.

Despite these material difficulties, the 35's worked very well with what they had in their campaigns. The group developed a sense of notoriety amongst the British press for the way in which they carried out their public demonstrations. These events were designed specifically to draw as much attention to the persecution of Soviet Jewry as possible. The leadership of the 35's noted that when their early campaigns no longer made the front pages of newspapers, they introduced necessary gimmicks in order to make them more appealing to the media.[499] Extravagant demonstrations and protests became a staple of the work of the 35's, appearing to

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[496] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 218 – 222; Admin files of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, UofS, MS 254/1/3/1, and MS 254/1/3/2.
[497] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[498] Ibid.
[499] 'Story of the 35's', MRC, MSS.387/6/CH/73.

want to outdo previous attempts at each event. There is a substantial list of demonstrations and protests that the 35's organised in the appendix of Gerlis' *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, in which the activities of individual regional groups as well as the main London body are described in great detail.[500] However, some of these events are worth noting here to illustrate both their originality and the lengths that 35ers went to highlight the position of *refuseniks*. These include:

- Holding a 'prisoners banquet' at the House of Commons in February 1972
- Handing out roubles to people passing Russia's Narodny Bank in London whilst dressed as Santa Claus in December 1972
- In February 1974, presenting a Soviet Naval Attaché with a lifebelt, illustrating the need to save the life of the *refusenik* Alexander Feldman.
- Arranging a 'prison meal' for Vladimir Bukovsky, the prominent Soviet dissident, shortly after his exile in 1976 in homage to prisoners of conscience.
- A sponsored parachute jump in July 1986[501]

The main reasons that the 35's adopted an extravagant approach to their campaigns and demonstrations was to generate as much attention from the media as possible. Indeed, it is perhaps telling that the nickname 'the 35's', given to them by members of the press, stuck. The relationship between the 35's and the press was key to the efforts of the campaign, and gave them a vehicle with which to spread their message to a much larger audience. This approach paid dividends, with many national newspapers reporting on these demonstrations, something that gave coverage to the plight of *refuseniks* where it would have otherwise been ignored.

A brief survey of British newspapers in the 1970s and 1980s shows an array of reports of the 35's demonstrations. These often included photographs of demonstrations and stage invasions by the 35's. Image 3.1 shows a photograph of a demonstration in London for Anatoly Shcharansky published in *The Times* on 24 February, 1978. This was a typical demonstration by the 35's, using the mourning Britannia as a media friendly way to attract attention to the plight of Shcharansky and illustrate that they wanted the British nation to grieve at the Soviet authorities persecution. Image 3.2 is another example of a report of a demonstration in *The Times*, showing the stage invasion at the Coliseum Theatre before a performance by the Georgian State Dance

[500] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 218 – 282.
[501] For details of these demonstrations, see Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, pp. 223-236.

Company in 1973. As well as these pictures of demonstrations there were also short reports, often no longer than three paragraphs, giving scant details of what had occurred.[502]

Image 3.1 – '35ers accompany Britannia who was in mourning over the detention of Anatoly Shcharansky', *The Times*, 24 February 1978

Image 3.2 – '35ers on the Stage at the Coliseum Theatre before the Georgian State Dance Company', *The Times*, 5 June 1973

[502] For example see, 'Demonstrators greet Soviet tourists', *The Times*, 6 November 1978 p. 5.; and 'Mothers protest against Shelepin's visit', *The Times*, 19 March 1975 p. 3.

Reporting of the demonstrations of the 35's was not limited to these objective forms of journalism alone. For example, Image 3.3 shows the sketch by the cartoonist Mac (Stan McMurtry) which was published in the *Daily Mail* on 18 May 1984. The depiction of a histrionic response from the Soviet authorities to the protests shows the clear threat that the efforts of 35ers had at these cultural events. It is interesting that in Mac's cartoon the 35's are clearly the elephant in the room, illustrating a comical response from the Soviet authorities to the stage invasions of the 35's, yet there is no explicit reference to the group itself. This could be for several reasons. Firstly, it may be the case that by 1984, the 35's had become synonymous with this sort of protest that it was meant to be obvious for the reader to decipher who was being referred to in this image. This can be considered to be in either a positive or negative manner, with the 35's being considered as either unnamed heroes or a nuisance. It may also have been the case that other groups in this period were attributed to these demonstrations at cultural events such as ballet performances, and that the efforts of the 35's were not directly accredited to the group themselves, but to the wider community of human rights activists active in Britain at this time. Either way, by not referring to the 35's directly, Mac has highlighted that these invasions had become so common place that they would have had a resonance amongst the readership of the *Daily Mail*, who would be aware that these demonstrations had occurred, and indeed what they had been protesting about.

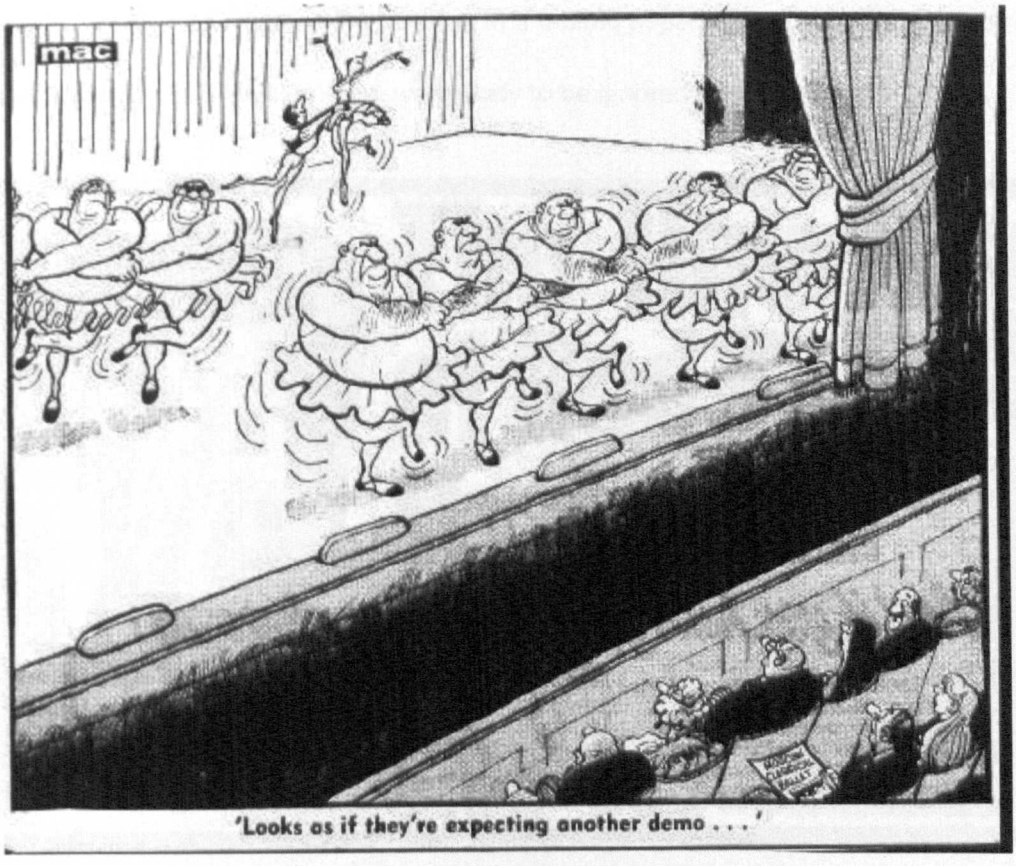

Image 3.3 - 'Looks as if they're expecting another demo', *Daily Mail*, 18 May 1984

Other tabloid newspapers in the 1980s reported on the demonstrations of the 35's, picking up on their extravagant manner and using them to effect in their articles. The *Daily Mirror* reported the 35's demonstration at the visit of Boris Ponomarev, a member of the Soviet politburo, to the grave of Karl Marx in a light hearted manner. The 35ers had dressed as ghosts, and declared themselves as 'the ghosts of Karl Marx carrying the spirit of the Helsinki Agreement that you have murdered by persecuting Soviet Jews'. The author of this article clearly picks up on the 'publicity-friendly' nature of this demonstration, as the language used in this article carries on the ghostly theme set out by the 35ers, referring to their 'chilling date' with this dignitary, who had to be 'spirited away by his aides'. This is continued in the mock up of ghosts 'haunting' the Soviet official as seen in Image 3.4.[503] All of these references highlight not only the humour that the author appears to have seen in this demonstration, but also the success of the 35's efforts to make their appeals media friendly. This was perhaps the most effective way of ensuring that their

[503] 'The Haunting of Red Boris', *Daily Mirror*, 3 November, 1976, p. 4 - 5.

message made its way into a prominent position in a tabloid paper, where letters and articles on the complexities of the *refusenik* problem were likely to be ignored by its readers.

The Haunting of Red Boris

KREMLIN hardliner Boris Ponomarev had a chilling date yesterday . . .

With the ghosts of Karl Marx.

Ponomarev, reputed to have masterminded the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, went to Highgate cemetery in North London to pay homage at Marx's tomb.

But waiting to haunt him were a score of women clad in white sheets — to represent the ghost of Communism's founder.

The ghosts were members of the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, who have been dogging the top Russian's footsteps since he arrived in Britain last week at the invitation of the Labour Party.

They carried banners declaring: "We are the ghosts of Karl Marx carrying the spirit of the Helsinki Agreement that you have murdered by persecuting Soviet Jews."

One ghost shouted: "We remind you that Marx was a Jew."

Mr. Ponomarev gave them a grim look. Then was spirited away by his aides.

Pictures by MIKE MALONEY.

Image 3.4 – The Haunting of Red Boris, *Daily Mirror*, 3 November 1976

What is perhaps most notable about the reporting of the 35's in the media is how the group is often referred to as an authority for information, something that stands somewhat in contrast to its protests and demonstrations. For example, an article in *The Times* on 29 April 1985 reported the transfer of the *refusenik* Iosif Begun to a jail in Moscow, referring to the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry as its sole source of evidence. This position as a reputable source of information becomes commonplace in articles referring to the 35's in the 1980s.[504] By being seen as a reliable source of information, the 35's occupied an interesting position for a pressure group, and one that had many benefits. By the late 1980s they were in a position to offer information to the press in the knowledge that it would be considered for publication. This gave a direct link between the campaign and journalists, something that the previously media friendly campaigns had sought to achieve.

[504] See 'Refuseniks's jail transfer', *The Times*, 29 April 1985, p.8; and 'The Waitnik Test', *The Times*, 28 November 1985, p. 13.

This authority was boosted by the regular circular produced by the 35's central office from June 1978 onwards. This bulletin contained an array of up-to-date information on the plight of *refuseniks*, including an array of clippings from the media and information about individual *refuseniks*.[505] This publication was a way in which the central 35's office distributed the information that it had collated about *refuseniks* to a wider audience. Alongside this, the 35's circular also contained details of the demonstrations and events that regional groups had conducted. Whilst this bulletin was not as professionally produced as materials on Soviet dissenters by other groups active in this area, such as Amnesty, the 35's bulletin contained a high level of information on the position of *refuseniks*. This material would have undoubtedly been useful for journalists and other concerned activists interested in the position of Soviet Jewry.

The relationship between the 35's and the British press was not a one way affair. Members of the 35's played a significant role in passing information on the plight of the *refuseniks* to members of the British press. The most prominent example of this occurring is the relationship between Bernard Levin and Michael Sherbourne, a prominent member of the 35's whose role in supporting the Anglo-Soviet Jewry movement deserves particular attention.

Michael Sherbourne

News flew around Moscow and the West that the KGB was planning to confine me to a psychiatric hospital. In a telephone conversation Michael Sherbourne convinced me that "they wouldn't dare do that," and he informed me that official representatives in England were trying to clarify my situation. "Ida, don't be afraid," he shouted into the receiver. "Don't be afraid, they won't dare."

Ida Nudel, *A Hand in the Darkness*[506]

Michael Sherbourne was the main link between the 35's and the *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union. The vast majority of the 35's were female, something which is perhaps obvious given the official name of the group, however there was a small male presence within the activities of the campaign. Husbands of 35ers regularly attended demonstrations and offered their support for the

[505] A collection of the 35's circular is available from June 1978 through to December 1985 in the papers of Peter Reddaway, held at the Global Resources Center, Gelman Library, George Washington University, Washington D.C, USA.

[506] I. Nudel, *A Hand in the Darkness: The Autobiography of a Refusenik* (New York, 1990) p. 94.

campaign. There were, however, no men within the leadership of the 35's. This is perhaps due to the social status of many of the 35's. Many of the husbands of 35ers were in full time employment and unable to dedicate the amount of time that their wives could to such a campaign. Indeed, Margaret Rigal noted that if the campaign were to have occurred in the twenty-first century, the leading 35ers would not have had the time to dedicate to this cause as they would also be in a professional careers.[507]

Sherbourne was in regular telephone contact with a variety of different *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union, having learnt Russian from a 'Teach Yourself' book after a bet with a fellow student that he wouldn't be able to.[508] In the 1970s and 1980s he spent upwards of 35 hours a week telephoning *refuseniks*, a figure which is even more notable when it is added that he also worked full time as a teacher.[509] Martin Gilbert neatly describes Sherbourne's efforts in his biography of Anatoly Shcharansky – 'Sherbourne's Russian was fluent, and his devotion to the *refuseniks* total'.[510] Sherbourne's conversations with *refuseniks* in the late 1960s can be considered as the start of the Anglo-Jewish response to the *refusenik* problem. George Rigal, the husband of Margaret, noted that Sherbourne himself was the entirety of the Soviet Jewry movement in Britain for a long period.[511] Sherbourne's efforts in supporting the *refuseniks* were supported financially by Cyril Stein. Stein, the former Chairman of the bookmakers Ladbrokes and Jewish philanthropist, paid Sherbourne's telephone bill every month, which given the frequency that he was calling both the Soviet Union and activists in the United States was a substantial amount.[512] Stein also offered significant financial support to the 35's, funding their office and aspects of their campaign.[513]

The ferocity with which Sherbourne went about his support for the *refuseniks* has led Gerlis to describe his efforts in the 1960s as a 'one man battle' fought by someone who was never

[507] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[508] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010, Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.
[509] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 19; Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.
[510] Gilbert, *Shcharansky*, p. 39.
[511] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[512] Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.
[513] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 39.

afraid to 'show his head above the parapet'.[514] Sherbourne's battles included vociferous attacks against the seeming inaction from established Jewish bodies in the UK, such as the British Board of Deputies, to support Soviet Jewry. In an open letter dated 28 June 1977, circulated to Soviet Jewry campaigners in Britain, Sherbourne vented his frustration at the lack of action to support the *refusenik* Anatoly Shcharansky from the Jewish leadership in Britain. He accused the Jewish leadership of 'cowardice, blindness, ineptitude, complacency' and simply concluded that 'SHCHARANSKY MUST BE SAVED'.[515] This letter can be seen as a clear and urgent call for action from the Jewish community in Britain by Sherbourne, who had a strong personal relationship with Shcharansky, built up in the course of their telephone conversations. A passionate desire to take active steps to support Soviet Jewry was a trait that Sherbourne shared with the 35's, something that led to him working closely with them. Sherbourne's admiration for the work of the 35's can be seen within this open letter in which he notes that 'were it not for the wonderful ladies of the 35's for whom I have the greatest respect, Shcharansky's name would be forgotten in this country'.[516]

[514] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 18.
[515] M. Sherbourne, 'THIS IS NOT AN INFORMATION SHEET. IT IS AN ACCUSATION' open letter dated 28/06/1977, UofS, MS 254/1/3/9. Block capitals were used in the original document to highlight this section and have been replicated in this text. The full text of this open letter is given in Appendix 3.
[516] Sherbourne, 'THIS IS NOT AN INFORMATION SHEET. IT IS AN ACCUSATION'. In the letter itself this section is in block capitals, seemingly to highlight this particular sentence. I have quoted this in lowercase in order to aid the readability of this piece.

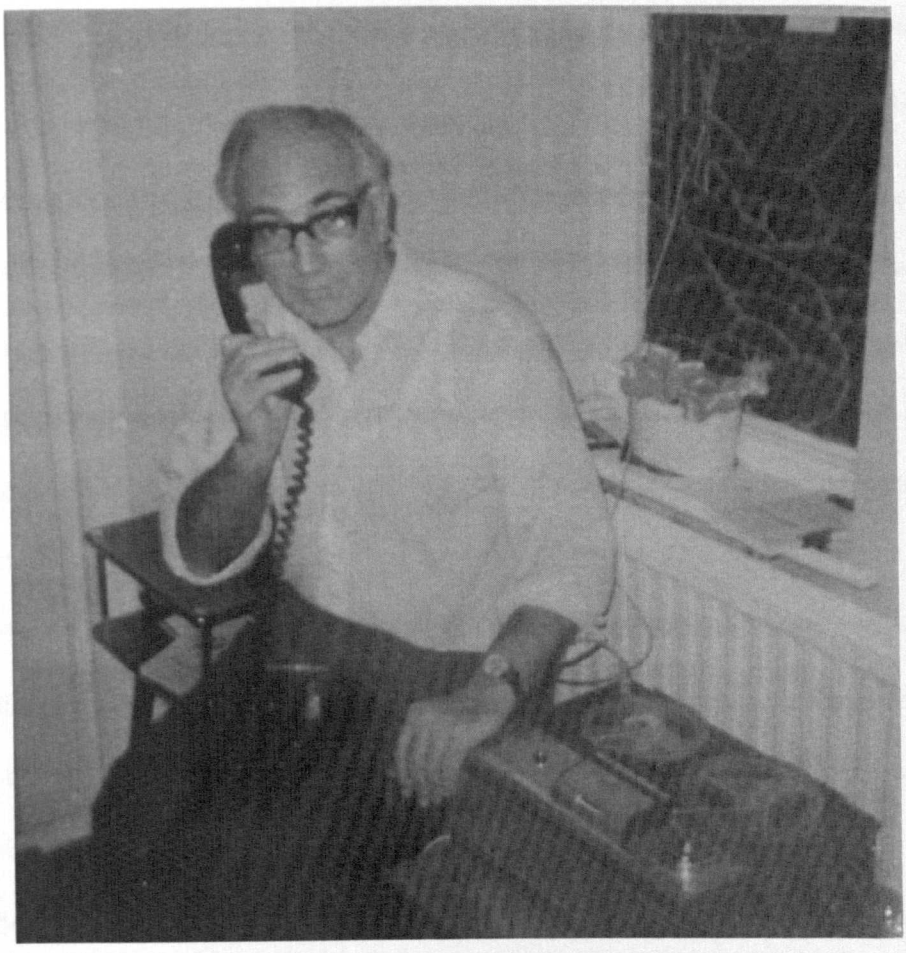

Image 3.5 - Michael Sherbourne at home

The term *refusenik* itself was coined by Sherbourne in 1971, who translated it from the Russian *otkaznik*, after it had been translated into Hebrew for him by the *refusenik* Gabriel Shapiro.[517] The subsequent international recognition of this term illustrates the importance not only of Sherbourne's conversations with Soviet Jews, but also of the 35's in spreading this information to the extent that his definition has now entrenched itself in the discourse on Soviet dissent. This is in itself indicative of the role played by Sherbourne and the 35's in development of knowledge regarding the *refuseniks* in Britain. Although this term is perhaps an obvious and direct translation from the Russian, it is perhaps testament to the work of the 35's that it stuck in the public discourse as opposed to other terms such as 'waitnik' or 'refusednik' which had also been

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http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/soviet_jews_exodus/English/WhoHelped_s/WhoHelpedSherbourne.shtml (accessed 12 April 2010 - article in *The Jerusalem Post*, 15 March 1990) *Otkaznik* derives from the Russian term *Otkaz* (refusal) hence the literal translation of *refusenik*.

used to describe the position of Soviet Jewry that had been refused exit visas. Especially so given the more accurate definition of the position of Soviet Jewry given by these other terms.

Sherbourne's greatest influence on the wider knowledge of the plight of the *refuseniks* was through his conversations with Bernard Levin. Sherbourne's link with Levin is arguably the most significant area where the work of the 35's was thrust into the British press. After being told of the position of the *refuseniks* by Sherbourne, Levin demanded that he contact a *refusenik* family using his telephone.[518] Levin wanted to know more about what their neighbours in the Soviet Union thought about their plight. It was at this point that Sherbourne had to explain the levels of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, and that *refuseniks* told their neighbours nothing of their situation through fear of reprisals.[519] Levin appears not to have initially understood the position of the *refuseniks*, and this enlightenment is arguably illustrated in the venom with which he wrote his later articles on the persecution occurring within the Soviet Union. He considered the persecuted as the 'true heroes' in the Soviet Union, and called for British people to take immediate action to support them. [520]

The initially naïve response from Levin was perhaps born out of his previous lack of knowledge of the plight of the *refuseniks*, something which Sherbourne had corrected in a seemingly revelatory fashion for him. It would not, therefore, be an exaggeration to state that Levin's articles in *The Times* on the persecution of *refuseniks* were due to the efforts of, and information provided by the 35's. Not only did Sherbourne fundamentally effect the discourse on the *refusenik* movement by defining them, his impact on the articles written by Levin meant that his influence was felt on a much larger scale on the British public.

Sherbourne's efforts in telephoning Soviet Jews were very well received by the *refuseniks*. Sherbourne built up strong personal links with many *refuseniks*, treating them as an extension of his family. Sherbourne campaigned tirelessly on behalf of Anatoly Shcharansky, and built up a very

[518] Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.
[519] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women In Black*, p. 20.
[520] For an example of these articles see Levin. B., 'Try a logical phone call to Moscow', *The Times*, 15 January 1981, p. 14; and Levin, B., 'Will British psychiatrists take actions against the torturers of the Soviet Union', *The Times*, 3 July 1975 p. 14.

strong rapport not only with Anatoly, but also his wife Avital and his close friends and family. Undoubtedly due to this link, the report of Shcharansky's trial first came to the West through Sherbourne's conversations with Leonid Shcharansky, Anatoly's brother. Leonid recalled the details of the trial to Sherbourne shortly after it had occurred, giving as close a transcript of the events as possible.[521] After Shcharansky was released from imprisonment and left the Soviet Union in February 1986, he spent some time with Sherbourne at his house in London. The photographs of this occasion, as seen in Image 3.6, suggest that this was a very friendly occasion. Indeed, they more closely resemble photographs of a family event rather than the meeting of a former prisoner of conscience and an activist who worked on his behalf.

Image 3.6 – Michael Sherbourne, Anatoly Shcharansky, Muriel Sherbourne and Avital Shcharansky, London 1986

Sherbourne's personal relations with the *refuseniks* were also noted in the Soviet Union itself. In the course of his many telephone conversations with Soviet Jews he built up close friendships. One of these was with the prominent *refusenik* Ida Nudel. Sherbourne had sent a copy of a photograph of himself in the midst of a telephone conversation (see Image 3.5) to Nudel

[521] Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.

to serve as a memory that there were people in the West concerned with her plight. This photograph was placed in a prominent position in her home, and can be clearly seen in a photograph that she sent to Sherbourne as shown in Image 3.7. Nudel's house was later searched by the KGB, and according to Sherbourne the only item taken was the photograph of himself.[522] This suggests that not only were the KGB trying to intimidate *refuseniks* by attempting to sever their links with Western activists, but also that they were aware of whom the figure in this photograph was. Sherbourne's activism had clearly been noted by the KGB, who had attempted to discredit him in the Soviet press, referring to him as 'the British Lord Sherbourne', and denouncing him as a fascist.[523]

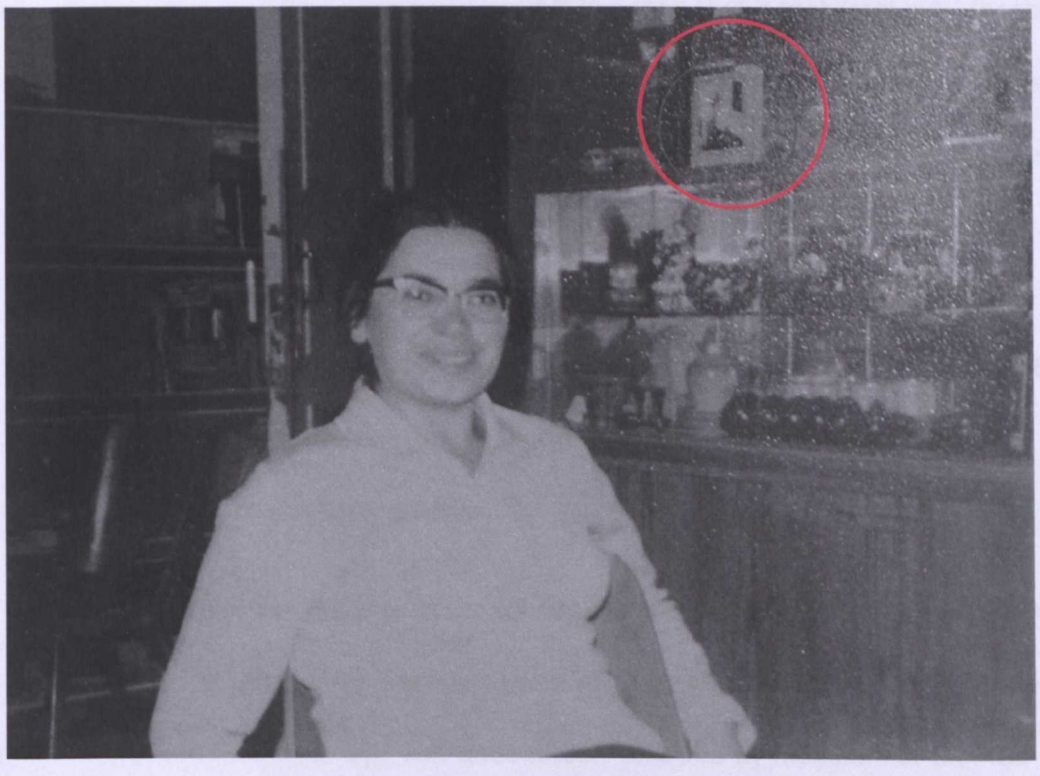

Image 3.7 – Ida Nudel at home, (photograph of Michael Sherbourne circled in red)

Alongside the dissemination of information received via Sherbourne, the 35's were involved in actively pressuring the Soviet authorities to give *refuseniks* exit visas. This campaigning focused on the Soviet embassy in London, where 35ers took an array of petitions and letters. The staff of the Soviet embassy in London, perhaps unsurprisingly, were very cold in their response to

[522] Interview with Michael Sherbourne, 9 May 2011.
[523] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black,* p. 20 – 21.

the 35's. In the 1970s a weekly letter was delivered by a 35er to the Soviet embassy in London which outlined the reports of persecution that had occurred in the Soviet Union that week. The embassy staff refused to accept these letters, initially locking the door and then the gate on the street to stop these deliveries. Margaret Rigal recalled one occasion when she was delivering the letter and by chance came across a member of the embassy staff as she approached the embassy:

> I stood there and he came along with his key or whatever and I said 'oh how nice, do you think you could take this letter in for me'. You see it was all charm and smiles and everything else. He took the letter and he looked at it and he recognised it for what it was and he looked at me and he told me what I could do and where I should be...If he could have absolutely slaughtered me he would have done so. It was real, real hatred.[524]

The threat of violence, although never actually followed through against the 35's was ever present in their campaign. John Simpson was correct in noting that it took 'real guts' for the 35's to stand up to the Soviet authorities.[525] This defiance of threats by the Soviet authorities is most notable in the recollection of the visits to the Soviet Union by the Rigals. Margaret Rigal recalled an experience she had in a Moscow airport as she went through customs with her husband. After being separated from other passengers in the queue for security clearance, the Rigals were taken out of the queue and led to a different area of the airport. Upon being forced to wait by the Soviet officials, Margaret simply sat down on the counter and started reading her book, something which greatly angered the officials. [526]

Margaret Rigal's sheer defiance at the actions of the Soviet guards is remarkable given her circumstances. She was one of the leading figures of a Western group formed to protest the actions of the Soviet authorities, who was undoubtedly followed by members of the KGB during her trip, and was arguably at their mercy in the airport. Yet she still had the nerve to protest at the actions of the security guard, retelling the events almost as a farce. Indeed, portraying this event in a humorous and almost ludicrous manner shows the resolve of the 35ers. The fact that this resilience occurred alongside the knowledge that some of her Russian friends had been imprisoned for 'sixteen days at a time for nothing', with some of them going on to serve much

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[524] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[525] Letter from John Simpson to the 35's dated 12 September 1994, UofS, MS 254/1/3/9.
[526] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.

longer sentences, makes this resilience stronger still.[527] Perhaps what gave the 35's the upper hand in this situation was that, in their opinion, the Russian authorities 'weren't very clever' and more importantly that they kept their own laws.[528] This emphasises the point that the 35's recognised their campaign as an intellectual battle, rather than a physical one, in which as long as they stuck to the rules they would be unharmed. This is certainly prevalent throughout their public demonstrations, with a clear emphasis on the spread of information and legality rather than unlawful disruption of any Soviet cultural activity. The central core of the 35's were unafraid of threats from the Soviet officials, undoubtedly due to the strong desire to do all they could to help the *refuseniks*. Daphne Gerlis, herself a member of the 35's, puts this neatly, stating that:

> Every 35er stressed that whatever 'risks' they may have taken and whatever inconveniences they may have encountered, faded into insignificance when compared with the knowledge that the freedom which they accepted as their birthright, was now being experienced by those for whom they had worked.[529]

In this intellectual conflict, not only were the 35's convinced that their efforts would not lead to physical repercussions but they knew that any hardship they were to endure would pale into insignificance to the eventual freedom given to others.

Threats to the 35's were not limited to the Soviet authorities. The response of the British far left was also very negative, who considered the efforts of the 35's as verging on heretical. Margaret Rigal notes that despite their negative response, she understood the criticisms of the British Communists, recognising that they had put 'all of their eggs in the Communist basket' and that they 'were elderly and too old to change'. Indeed, she noted that 'they had done their bit in their time' by fighting against the British fascists of the 1930s, and were understandably reluctant to oppose the actions of a group that denounced the ideology they had done so much to support.[530] Rigal's understanding of the resentment from the British Communists is perhaps telling of her own position. By recognising the previous resistance that the British Communists

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[527] Ibid.
[528] Ibid.
[529] Gerlis, *Those Wonderful Women in Black*, p. 181.
[530] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.

offered to the fascist threat earlier in the century, it is possible that she recognised the importance of upholding principle; a positive attribute that the 35's appear to have adhered to.

The 35's were always very keen to attain the ears of those in positions of power within the British government. Margaret Rigal offered an interesting analogy of her relationship with those in the British government, noting:

> it takes five years of writing regularly before they really take any interest in you and it's ten years before they trust you enough to do something, after twenty years they say 'oh hello Margaret' without knowing who you are or what you are, they know the name but they don't know the face.[531]

Margaret Rigal appears to denote herself as 'part of the furniture' in the corridors of British government, in itself a testament to the frequency with which she was in and around Westminster. Her recollection is also telling in that it displays the good relationship that she held with members of Parliament, something that was regularly utilised in appeals. She recalls that after she took up the position within the 35's as the MPs contact, she could get 'a hundred MPs to sign anything more or less'.[532] This is revealing not only of the relationship that Rigal had with MPs, but also as to how she utilised this link in the group's campaigns, using the reputation of politicians to support petitions.

The tenacity of the 35's campaign is clear to see from the groups archive, held at the University of Southampton. The sheer amount of correspondence between the 35's and individual MPs is staggering, with regular appeals sent from the 35's *en masse* to MPs. On the whole, responses to these appeals were positive, with regular offers to sign a petition or send a letter to the Soviet ambassador. What is notable about the responses to these appeals is that they are not isolated to MPs from particular parties or areas of the country, perhaps illustrating that human rights abuse in the Soviet Union was a cross-party issue. However, appeals were not always met with offers of assistance from MPs. An example of this came from Robert Adley who declined to help the 35's in a letter dated 13 July, 1978, stating:

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[531] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[532] Ibid.

I am as concerned for the persecuted citizens of the Soviet Union as I am for Palestinians deprived of the right to live in the land in which they were born. So I must decline your invitation.[533]

Rigal's response to this letter was one of restraint, and indeed respect for the position of an MP, something that she recalls played a substantial part in gaining the support of MPs.[534] Her response appears to be an attempt to change the opinion of Adley, putting her call for assistance in more humanistic terms stating that any increase of freedom for a minority would affect the rest of mankind.[535] This shows not only her attempts to persuade dissenting opinion, but also her persistence and restraint in doing so.

What is interesting about the support from MPs is that it did not translate directly into Parliamentary speeches on the work of the 35's. The 35's are rarely mentioned in Hansard; the only reference to the group occurred in the House of Lords on 29 June 1977, when Lord Hylton asked the Government representative, Lord Goronwy-Roberts, what was being done in response to the abrupt expulsion of three leading 35ers from Yugoslavia.[536] What is apparent, however, is that there were an array of MPs who regularly raised the plight of the *refuseniks* in parliament in the 1970s and 1980s. For example, on 11 May, 1983, Alec Woodall asked the then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Malcolm Rifkind if on a recent trip to Moscow he had raised the plight of Vladimir Slepak and Alexander Lerner with the Soviet authorities. In the same debate, John Blackburn also asked after 'Yosef Begum'[537] and 'others of his religion'.[538] The three *refuseniks* mentioned here were among those whose plights were prominently promoted by the 35's.[539] It is likely, therefore, that these MPs had received information about these

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[533] Letter to Margaret Rigal dated 13 July 1978, UofS, MS 254/1/1/1.
[534] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 March 2010.
[535] Letter to Robert Adley from Margaret Rigal dated 2 August 1978, UofS, MS 254/1/1/1.
[536] Hansard, House of Lords, 29 June 1977, Vol. 384, cc 1212 – 1214, available at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1977/jun/29/yugoslavia-expulsion-of-british-citizens#S5LV0384P0_19770629_LWA_6 (Accessed 4 August 2010).
[537] This appears to be a typing error in Hansard, referring to the *refusenik* Iosif Begun.
[538] Hansard, House of Commons, 11 May 1983, Vol. 42, c317W, available at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1983/may/11/soviet-union-human-rights#S6CV0042P0_19830511_CWA_172 (Accessed 4 August 2010).
[539] See 'Release of Shcharansky', dated 11 February 1986, UofS, MS 254/1/3/23; Sherbourne 'THIS IS NOT AN INFORMATION SHEET. IT IS AN ACCUSATION' UofS, MS 254/1/3/9; and Draft of Albert Hall Leaflet, UofS, MS 254/1/3/46.

individuals from the 35's, and had raised their plight in Parliament without directly referencing where their information had come from.

In her position as the MPs contact, Margaret Rigal also made connections with many leading MPs. Notably, the relationship between the 35's and Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister between 1979 and 1990, was strong. Thatcher was deeply concerned about the human rights abuses in the Soviet Union, a point she regularly made in her correspondence with the 35's. Margaret Rigal herself noted that:

> Margaret Thatcher was really a very active supporter and she knew more about what was going on, and the details of the *refuseniks* than many of our members. She was this extraordinary mixture of sympathy and not sympathy. And she was sympathetic to the *refuseniks* that was something she understood and sympathised with. And she was [a] very nice woman.[540]

Rigal's statement on Thatcher is mirrored by correspondence between Rita Eker and Thatcher. In a letter dated 18th March, 1992, Eker puts her thanks for Thatcher's efforts in the strongest terms:

> We have thanked you on so many occasions for the constant and unequalled assistance you have given us. We really find it impossible to express our appreciation for all that you have done for us. On behalf of all Soviet Jews (and the Soviet Germans, Armenians and other minorities who built on our campaign) thank you once more. You, at the head of the Foreign Office, led the struggle for human rights which in the end opened Soviet gates to freedom. Without you the world would be a very different place.[541]

The good relationship between the 35's and Thatcher was maintained through regular correspondence between the two throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Both Eker and Rigal regularly sent Thatcher letters, often congratulating her for a landmark in office or a successful election result with a bouquet of flowers, or simply to give her a copy of the latest 35's calendar.[542] This was in an attempt to keep the relationship with the Prime Minister as strong as possible so that information about the persecution of *refuseniks* could be directly sent to the highest political office in Britain, and ensuring that it would be recognised.

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[540] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[541] Correspondence with Margaret Thatcher 1973 – 1982: Letter from Rita Eker to Margaret Thatcher dated 18 March 1992, UofS, MS 254/1/1/31.
[542] For examples of these letters see Correspondence with Margaret Thatcher, UofS, MS 254/1/1/29.

There are several factors that have influenced Thatcher's interest in the 35's. Firstly, it must be noted that in her position as MP for Finchley, many leading 35ers – including Michael Sherbourne and Rita Eker – were her constituents. This may well have had an impact on the petitions that were sent to Parliament by these 35ers, as this would have been the first port of call for many of these appeals. Secondly, the very fact that it was the **Women's** Campaign for Soviet Jewry may well have had an affect on Thatcher. Given her prominent position as the leading female member of the House of Commons, she may have felt more empathy for this women's group and for the action that they took in the face of seeming inaction by the Board of British Deputies, with its predominantly male executive.

Thatcher also benefitted from her good relationship with the 35's. Close links with this organisation meant that she could get the latest information from them regarding the *refuseniks*, something that was undoubtedly useful for the government to have. In a letter to Rita Eker dated 2 August 1982 regarding the worsening position of Anatoly Shcharansky, Thatcher requests that any information received by the 35's regarding Shcharansky be treated with 'suitable discretion' and forwarded to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This could be taken to mean that either the 35's were to distribute this information in a sensible manner, omitting anything that may have harmed the prospects of his release or that this information was not to be distributed to anyone but the government. Either way, this placed the 35's in control of the information that they had received, suggesting a level of trust that the Prime Minister had in the work of the group. What is clear, however, is that it shows an insistence on being informed of the latest developments on Shcharansky that the 35's had, suggesting that Thatcher held their information in high regard. This statement is underlined in hand by Thatcher, seemingly only to highlight the importance that she placed on it.[543] This is not to suggest that she utilised the 35's simply as a source of information, but that her good relations with its leading members created a flow of information into the government regarding the *refuseniks*, something that the British Embassy in Moscow has subsequently been accused of failing to effectively do for both Soviet Jewry and the wider

[543] Correspondence with Margaret Thatcher 1973 – 1982: Letter from Margaret Thatcher to Rita Eker, dated 2 August 1982, UofS, MS 254/1/1/31.

dissident movement in this period.[544] Finally, it was doubtless that Thatcher felt a genuine sympathy for the plight of the *refuseniks* and other dissidents in the Soviet Union, and wanted to help in anyway that she could. It must also be noted that Thatcher had a clear interest in the protection of human rights, especially in the Soviet Union and other totalitarian states. Her relationships with human rights groups and prominent individuals involved who supported human rights, such as the 35's and Vladimir Bukovsky, were strong, which suggests that she placed high importance to this issue.[545] Indeed Thatcher's admiration and support for human rights campaigners in this period is made clear throughout her memoirs.[546] It is perhaps a combination of all of these factors that explain why the relationship between the 35's and Thatcher was as good as it was.

Regardless of the reasoning behind Thatcher's support for the 35's, it is clear that her assistance was not only most welcomed by its members, but incredibly useful. For example, a letter sent to Thatcher from the 35's in December 1984 offered their thanks for her acceptance of a sack of postcards to be delivered to the Soviet Embassy from 10 Downing Street. This letter notes that the Soviet Embassy would never accept such a delivery from a group such as the 35's, but that they would 'hesitate to refuse them if they came from Downing Street'.[547] This not only gave the 35's the ability, in this instance, to ensure that the Soviet Embassy received their delivery, but that it came with the apparent endorsement of the British government – a very powerful affirmation of support for their campaign, and something that would have undoubtedly raised their profile in the eyes of the Soviet authorities.

The good relationship with authority enjoyed by the 35's extended to the way in which the police responded to their demonstrations. Margaret Rigal notes the positive response of the police to the 35's demonstrations, remarking that it broke up their often monotonous days on the

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[544] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010.
[545] Boobbyer, 'Vladimir Bukovskii and Soviet Communism', p.465.
[546] M. Thatcher, *The Downing Street* Years (London, 1993) p.452 and p. 813
[547] Correspondence with Margaret Thatcher 1983 – 1987, Letter to Margaret Thatcher from Rita Eker and Margaret Rigal, Dated 13 December 1984, UofS, MS 254/1/1/30.

beat in London.[548] This response from the police was partly due to the fact that they trusted the 35ers not to be violent or aggressive in their protests. Rigal argues that this response from the police would not occur in modern London due to the constant threat of violence and terrorism in the twenty-first century.[549] The only occasion where the police had to take direct action was when a group of 35ers had chained themselves to the railings of the Foreign Office in London, a criminal offence in British law. Interestingly, the police were forced to use wire cutters to break the handcuffs and release the protestors. Rigal claims that these wire cutters had not been used since the handcuffs of the suffragettes had been broken, possibly illustrating a symbolic link between the two groups.[550] Even in the aftermath of this demonstration, where thirty 35ers were arrested and eventually brought to court for their actions, Rigal recalled that no charges were brought except warnings to stay out of trouble for six months.[551] Despite having committed a criminal offence, their position as upper-middle class Jewish ladies perhaps helped them in this instance, and secured a light response from the local magistrate. It must be noted that this law breaking was certainly the exception, rather than the rule of the 35's demonstrations.

What is most notable about the police response to the public demonstrations by the 35's is the apparent leniency with which they were treated, and the relative freedom that these demonstrators were given, allowing protests to occur at the visits of Soviet dignitaries. This is something that was met with great shock by the Soviet dignitaries who visited Britain. George Rigal recalls the Mayor of Moscow being made visibly shaken by these demonstrations, eventually cutting his visit to London short.[552] He noted that some of these Soviet visitors were so taken in by their own propaganda that they believed that the 35's demonstrations were being carried out under the order of the British Government.[553] Had this been the case, this would have only heightened the impact of the 35's campaigns, which would have been considered more seriously by the Soviet authorities. Whether this had any impact on the lives of *refuseniks* is unclear;

[548] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.
[549] Ibid.
[550] Ibid.
[551] Ibid.
[552] Ibid.
[553] Ibid.

however it certainly raised the profile of the 35's amongst the Soviet hierarchy and meant that their threat was considered seriously.

Given the background of the majority of its members, it is somewhat surprising to consider the lengths to which the campaigns of the 35's went, and the potential risks that they took. The extent of these campaigns illustrate the drive these individuals had to support *refuseniks* and that they had a genuine determination in their efforts. In a statement entitled 'The First Ten Years', the 35's noted that they had been formed 'by a group of Jewish housewives who had become impatient by the lack of support for Soviet Jewry from Anglo-Jewry'.[554] It is clear that the 35's were a group born out of the inaction of others and a willingness to stand up for the persecuted *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union. Why then did this group of predominantly upper-middle class Jewish women in London choose to devote huge amounts of time and effort to offer their support to *refuseniks*, who, on the whole, they did not initially know? Considering that the 35's were by no means a rigid organisation, it is clear that there is no definitive answer to this question that would cover the entirety of their membership. However, there a few explanations for their work that are worth exploring as they reveal several interesting traits about the 35's themselves.

It may have been that a sense of genuine altruism drove some 35ers to take action to support *refusenik* families. Indeed, the personal risks taken by many 35ers and the amount of financial effort and time put into the work of the campaign needed a sense of selflessness from its members. However, it would be erroneous to claim that this was the sole reason for the efforts of the 35's due to the cases that they supported being predominantly of Jewish faith. The only non-Jewish dissident that the 35's supported prominently was Andrei Sakharov, who himself was an active advocate of Jewish freedoms.[555] The shared Jewish background of the 35ers and the *refuseniks* is clear to see. It is almost certain that the 35ers felt that they had a duty to stand up

[554] Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Admin (Margaret Rigal and Rita Eker's personal files), Undated statement: "The First Ten Years", UofS, MS 254/1/3/2.
[555] Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Admin Public Handouts 'Sakharov Day' appeal (05 June 1984) UofS, MS 254/1/3/23.

against the persecution of the *refuseniks*, with whom they undoubtedly felt a link due to their common religious faith. Jewish believers have been subjected to a vast amount of persecution throughout their history, most notably in the Tsarist pogroms in Russia and the Holocaust instigated by fascists in Eastern Europe. The 35's may have therefore been dedicating their efforts to supporting those who were being persecuted for holding the same beliefs as them. As mentioned above, the 35's outweighed the threats that they were faced with by the sensation of succeeding in securing the freedom of any Soviet Jews. In order for such a reasoning to continue their work in the face of any threats from either Soviet officials or members of the British public they had to have a significant bond with those that they assisted. This bond came in the form of a shared Jewish faith. Margaret Rigal talks about this bond, highlighting the necessity of trust:

> This is where the Jews had it compared to anyone else cause the Jews trusted each other and this is one of the things that made all the difference. When Michael [Sherbourne] got onto Viktor they were two people who understood what the other one was talking about. When we were in there they trusted us and we trusted them. Admittedly you could occasionally get somebody who wasn't trustworthy but it was very seldom'[556]

This trust was something felt to be beyond a friendship. The links between the 35's and the *refuseniks* that they campaigned for, although seemingly an obvious reason for their efforts, should not be underestimated as a coincidental reason for their efforts. Trust was paramount to the activities of the 35's. There was more to the efforts of the 35's than just a simple identification with their Soviet counterparts. There was a genuine trust between the two groups, something more akin to a familial relationship than to a casual identification with a fellow believer in a different land. This is clear in the relationship that Michael Sherbourne had with *refuseniks* such as Shcharansky and Nudel. When it is considered that many British Jews had descendents who had emigrated from the territory of the Soviet Union in response to the persecution of the early twentieth century, this familial link becomes more pronounced. Indeed, the photographic images

[556] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010. Viktor's surname is unknown.

and recollections of the visits of 35ers to *refusenik* families in the Soviet Union held in the 35's archive could easily be mistaken for photographs of family events.[557]

Although the relationship of trust between these Jews offers an explanation for the efforts of the 35's, it does not explain the direction of the group itself, nor why it was committed to the dissemination of information regarding the *refuseniks* rather than a more aggressive, or even militant approach. The reasoning for this perhaps lies in the history of the Anglo-Jewish community, especially its response to the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust of the 1930s and 1940s. The efforts of the 35's can be attributed to the attempt to fill the void in public knowledge about the persecution of *refuseniks* in the Soviet Union. This was in direct response to the lack of information circulated in Britain about the Holocaust in the 1930s and 1940s. The need to educate the British public about the position of Soviet Jewry was doubtless seen by the 35's in the same light as the need to educate about the events of the Holocaust. Margaret Rigal noted the distinct lack of education that she had about the 'big politics' surrounding the events of the Holocaust, and was determined that she wouldn't let her children grow up 'not knowing anything'.[558] When this is considered in relation to the sheer amount of material compiled by the 35's about the persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union, it becomes apparent that there was an educational aspect to their work. The 35's wanted to educate the wider public about the persecutions that occurred in the Soviet Union before they became an afterthought or regret that people wished they had known about. Tied up with this is the potential to prevent another tragedy comparable to the Holocaust, something which, given the religious ties of the 35's, would have had a particularly strong resonance. It can be argued that the activity of the 35's was in fact a post-emptive reaction to the Holocaust, and a pre-emptive attempt to halt further persecution in the Soviet Union. An example of the link that the 35's felt between the Holocaust and the persecution of Soviet Jewry can be seen in delivery of Jewish books to the Soviet Union in October 1988. This delivery occurred on the fiftieth anniversary of the Kristallnacht, an event that has

[557] See 35's Photographs of meetings with *refuseniks*, UofS, MS 254/4/1-18.
[558] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.

been described as the beginning of the Holocaust.[559] The delivery of Jewish books was in an attempt to preserve Jewish culture within the Soviet Union, and such a delivery date is clearly laden with emotive reasoning.

The link between the events of the Holocaust and the persecution of the *refuseniks* is also clearly noted in Michael Sherbourne's venomous open letter dated 28 June 1977, in which he criticised the lack of action from the Jewish leadership in Britain towards the persecution of Soviet Jewry. Sherbourne discusses the sentencing of Shcharansky in this letter, noting that the prison sentence he received was substantially shorter than that of Yuri Orlov. Shcharansky's criminal offence was being a member of the Helsinki Monitoring Group in Moscow, of which Orlov was its chairman. Sherbourne argued that:

Clearly Shcharansky is on trial for his life because he is a Jewish leader and meanwhile Jewish leaders here twiddle their thumbs – they have forgotten DREYFUS – they have forgotten MENDEL BEILIS – they have forgotten the HOLOCAUST – they have never heard of ENTEBBE.[560]

The accusation from Sherbourne is clear. He concluded that Shcharansky was disproportionally punished because he was a prominent Jewish figure in the Soviet Union. He felt that ignorance of the persecution of Soviet Jews by the Jewish leadership in Britain was inexcusable, especially so given the persecution of the figures that he lists. The link between the persecution of *refuseniks* and the Holocaust was not only a very powerful manner with which to highlight the plight of Soviet Jewry, but also a way to rally a strong emotional response from British Jews.

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[559] See M. Gilbert, *Kristallnacht: Prelude to Destruction* (London, 2007).

[560] Sherbourne, 'THIS IS NOT AN INFORMATION SHEET. IT IS AN ACCUSATION'. Block capitals and underlining by Sherbourne, replicated in this quotation to show emphasis. Alfred Dreyfus was a Jewish officer in the French Army who in 1894 was convicted on dubious evidence of spying for Prussia. This case exposed widespread anti-Semitism within French society, and led to the official separation of Church and State. See R. Overy 'Review of The Dreyfus Affair by Piers Paul Read', *The New Statesman*, 23 January 2012, available at http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2012/01/dreyfus-affair-france-army (accessed 29 May 2012) Mendel Beilis was a Ukrainian Jew accused ritually murdering a Christian boy in 1911. These charges were later dismissed, and were clearly fabricated. See H. Levinson, 'A dark lie through the ages', BBC News Online, 23 January 2004, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/3420595.stm (accessed 29 May 2012). In July 1976, Israeli soldiers rescued a group of hostages held by pro-Palestinian hijackers at Entebbe airport in Uganda. For details of this raid, see R. Berg, 'Recollections of Entebbe, 30 years on', BBC News Online, 2 July 2006, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/5101412.stm (accessed 29 May 2012).

The urgency of the efforts of the 35's perhaps explains the threat that they felt that the Soviet Jews faced, and the need to prevent a potential genocide. This perhaps explains Margaret Rigal's particular pride in her recollection of the efforts of the 35's, something that neatly points to the reasons for the efforts of the 35's and the success that they had:

Everybody that we had been struggling for came out, I don't think anyone was left behind at all.[561]

Keston College

East-West relations are bedevilled by sloganising and facile generalisations. Keston College provides the basis for a more informed dialogue on the subject of religion in Communist lands. Anyone who pretends to an understanding of the present and future shape of Eastern Europe must take the contribution of religious belief seriously. Keston is doing invaluable work in providing the raw material upon which a really informed and scholarly analysis of contemporary religious trends in Communist countries can be built. The staff are working in a very complex and difficult area and deserve the greatest encouragement and support from the Churches and bodies they seek to serve.

Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury[562]

Whilst the 35's were notorious for their demonstrations and active form of campaigning, other groups took a more academic approach to the issue of religious persecution in the Soviet Union. Keston College[563] were the most important group that took this approach, formed in 1969 to research the oppression of religious belief in the Soviet Union and other communist nations.[564]

Despite the important role that Keston played in the study of religion in the Soviet Union, there has been little scholarship dedicated to analysing the group itself. *Be Our Voice: The Story of*

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[561] Interview with George and Margaret Rigal, 25 February 2010.

[562] Letter to Rev. Bernard Tidball from Robert Runcie, dated 26 June 1981, Picture file, Keston College archive, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

[563] Originally called the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism at its foundation, it was renamed Keston College after it obtained premise in the village of Keston, in Bromley, Greater London, where it conducted the vast majority of its work. The group is now officially called Keston Institute.

[564] Keston College Charity Commission report, available at http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/CharityFramework.aspx?RegisteredCharityNumber=314103&SubsidiaryNumber=0 (Accessed 17 June 2010). The actual date of the formation of Keston is debatable. The first council meeting of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism (CSRC), the forerunner to Keston College was in 1969, its memorandum and articles of association are dated 9 October, 1970 and Keston College was registered as a charity on 8 September, 1971. Given that the CSRC was the precursor to Keston, I take its first council meeting as the beginning of the group, something which Bourdeaux agrees with, noting 1969 as the 'official date of our foundation'. Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010. In order to maintain readability, this piece will refer to 'Keston' throughout, rather than the group's name at the specific time in question.

Michael Bourdeaux and Keston College, by Jenny Robertson, was the first piece that looked at the history and background of Keston itself.[565] Published in 1984 as part of the Keston series of books[566], it is a general account of the work of Keston from 1970 to 1983. It is also the story of The Revd Canon Dr Michael Bourdeaux, the Anglican Priest who founded Keston College and was the driving force of the organisation from its establishment. Robertson's piece is very positive about the work of Keston. Considering that it was published by Keston and written by an active Keston member, this is somewhat unsurprising. The fact that it was published by Keston is in itself of interest, suggesting that this account is how Keston wanted to be seen by the wider public. The year of publication of this Keston book is also problematic with regards to an objective view of its history. Bourdeaux was awarded the Templeton Prize in 1984, in recognition of his research into the persecution of religious belief in the Soviet Union, the same year as the publication of Robertson's piece.[567] Given the international prestige that surrounded the award of the Templeton Prize, it is likely that the publication of this book at this time was in celebration of the work of Bourdeaux, something that would have undoubtedly influenced its composition.

Another piece that considers the history of Keston is the article in the *Keston Newsletter*, 'Ringing the Changes, Keston at Forty (1969-2009)' by Michael Bourdeaux which can be seen as a reflection on the work of Keston by one of its leading members.[568] This piece is useful in its own right as an internal recollection and assessment of Keston's work, however, like Robertson's work it inevitably lacks the critical edge needed in an academic analysis of this group. Its brevity is also an issue; two and half pages of comment on the forty years of Keston's existence is bound to leave large areas of significance out. Bourdeaux's writings are important for the analysis of his

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[565] J. Robertson, *Be Our Voice: The Story of Michael Bourdeaux and Keston College* (London, 1984).

[566] A major part of Keston's activism was the publication of research on the position of religious belief in the Soviet Union. This included a variety of periodicals, including *Religion in Communist Lands*, *Frontier*, and the Keston News Service. A prominent part of this was a collection of self published pieces which formed the Keston Series. A list of this series, alongside other Keston publications is provided in Appendix 4. The central role of publications continues in Keston's current guise, producing the biannual *Keston Newsletter* (available at http://www.keston.org.uk/newsletter.php (accessed 9 August 2012)) and an regular bulletin on religion in contemporary Russian (available [In Russian] at http://www.keston.org.uk/russianreview.php (accessed 9 August 2012)).

[567] For more information on the Templeton Prize see http://www.templetonprize.org/ (accessed 6 August 2010)

[568] M. Bourdeaux, 'Ringing the Changes, Keston at Forty (1969-2009)', *Keston Newsletter*, No. 10, (2009) pp. 1-3.

role in the work of Keston, and the part that he played throughout, and it is therefore worth noting that this short piece is very useful for seeing a condensed version of Keston's history through Bourdeaux's eyes. However, a much longer set of memoirs or an autobiography would offer a greater insight.

More recently there have been two pieces in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, which have looked at the work of Keston. These pieces have focused primarily on the role of Keston in the Post-Soviet era. Gerd Stricker and Walter Sawatsky's 'Postscript - Keston Institute in Transition' offer a brief synopsis of the history of Keston, touching on issues of finance and the group's aims.[569] However, this piece is written as a comparison of Keston with the German group *Galube in der 2. Welt* – another organisation researching the persecution of religious believers in the Soviet Union – and very much in the context of Keston's dramatic changes in late 1990s. The fact that this article is a postscript to an edition of this journal is in itself indicative of the position of research into the history of Keston.

Davorin Peterlin's analysis of Keston continues in a similar manner to the work of Stricker and Sawatsky by focusing on the more recent elements of Keston's transition from 2003 to 2006.[570] Peterlin's piece focuses on Keston's publication output in this period, although it does offer a very brief history of the Keston itself. Of this brief history, little over a page in length, half of the text is focused on Keston's activities in the post-Soviet era.[571] Given the work of Keston in the 1970s and 1980s in researching and publishing material regarding the Soviet persecution of religion, this brevity cannot be considered as substantial analysis. It must also be noted that Peterlin was the Director of Keston Institute in the period of his analysis, and this link undoubtedly influences his assessment of Keston's history.

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[569] G. Stricker and W. Sawatsky, 'Postscript – Keston in Transition', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (June 2003) pp. 1-8.
[570] D. Peterlin, 'An Analysis Of The Publishing Activity of Keston Institute In The Context Of Its Last Three Years Of Operation In Oxford (2003-2006)', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (February, 2010) pp. 1-17.
[571] Peterlin, 'The Publishing Activity of Keston', p. 2-3.

The historiography of Keston to date can be split into two groups, internal reflections on the groups work by its members and commentary on the internal divisions within Keston in the 1990s. What is clearly lacking in the scholarship is an analytical piece on Keston's activity in the 1970s and 1980s, written in the wider post-Cold War context. This section will offer a more thorough examination of Keston's work in the period 1969 to 1985. This will not only fill a gap in the scholarship surrounding Keston, but it will also allow comparison of Keston's activities to other human rights in this period covered by this thesis.

From its inception, Keston developed a reputation as being a reliable research body that produced quality academic research on the position of religion in the Soviet Union. The academic foundation of this group can be clearly seen in the background of its four founding members: Michael Bourdeaux, who was noted for his research into the position of religion in the Soviet Union; the diplomat and writer Sir John Lawrence, noted for his links with the BBC and religious organisations such as the World Council of Churches; Peter Reddaway, the academic and human rights activist who has been discussed at length in the course of this thesis; and Leonard Schapiro, Professor of Political Science with Special Reference to Russian Studies at the London School of Economics, an influential and well respected academic. Each of these individuals held established academic credentials, and a passion for the study of the Soviet Union that was arguably transmitted through Keston's publications. Each of these individuals was undoubtedly an expert in their study of the Soviet Union. Their affiliation to the group from its formation was a great bonus to Keston, who benefitted from an increased academic reputation from these links. Although all of these individuals were active in Keston's work, mainly through publication of articles in the variety of Keston periodicals, Bourdeaux undoubtedly was the leading figure and driving force behind Keston.

Image 3.8 Michael Bourdeaux speaking alongside Margaret Thatcher at a Keston College reception held at Church House, Westminster, 25 April 1984.

Trained as an Anglican priest, Bourdeaux's initial knowledge of the persecution of religion in the Soviet Union was built up during a year spent as a student in Moscow as part of a British Council cultural exchange that started in 1959.[572] This year in the Soviet Union gave him the opportunity to see the persecution of religion for himself, giving him an insight that could not have been achieved by academic route alone. As he recalls, 'what I learnt about religion and human rights in Russia...came not through book knowledge primarily but with my own two feet'.[573] It could be argued that the experience of witnessing persecution had a much more dramatic effect on Bourdeaux than an academic knowledge of this oppression ever could. It is also essential to note the impact that Bourdeaux's faith had on his devotion to his work. When he returned to Moscow in 1964 to conduct research for his first work *Opium of the People*, he was told by friends of a Church that was destroyed in Moscow under the pretence of the extension of

[572] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010.
[573] Ibid.

the Metro system. He visited this church on his first night in Moscow and bumped into three Ukrainian women who had travelled to Moscow to distribute a second set of documents to Westerners about the planned closure of the Pochaev Monastery in Ukraine. The first set of documents sent by these women had previously made their way to Nicholas Zernov, the Spalding lecturer in Eastern Orthodox culture at the University of Oxford, via a French school teacher. Bourdeaux had been informed about these documents by Zernov, and part of his research in the Soviet Union was to check their authenticity.[574] Upon meeting these women, Bourdeaux was motioned to follow them to the outskirts of Moscow so as not to be overheard by others who might inform the authorities of any conversation that took place. Once at the outskirts, they gave him documentation about the persecution of Christians in Ukraine which he smuggled out of the Soviet Union. This chance meeting is described by Bourdeaux as both a 'total and utter coincidence' and 'the way of the hand of God'.[575]

Bourdeaux's training in the Russian language whilst on National Service in the Army also contains these personal religious connotations. Although he originally intended to study French and German, Bourdeaux was posted a week later than expected due to illness and subsequently missed the entrance exam for his language training. Upon protesting to the commanding officer, who took pity on Bourdeaux's position, he was placed on a Russian language training scheme.[576]

Given Bourdeaux's Anglican faith, he interpreted these events as a religious calling for his later work in publicising the religious persecution that occurred in the Soviet Union.[577] The feeling of divine intervention felt by Bourdeaux is most clearly noted in *Risen Indeed*, in which he states:

God's signature is on the small events of this world just as indelibly as on the large. His two direct interventions into my life when he wrested the steering wheel from my grasp to set me on a new course.[578]

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[574] Ibid.
[575] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010
[576] M. Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed: Lessons in Faith from the USSR* (Purley, 1987) pp. 1-3.
[577] See Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 19 May 2010 and M. Bourdeaux, 'News from the Centre', RCL, Vol. 1, No. 1, (1973) p. 2.
[578] Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed*, p.1.

This clearly explains the passion with which Bourdeaux went about his study of the persecution of religion in the Soviet Union, and his reasoning behind the direction of his life's work. It is clear that Bourdeaux's activism was in direct relation to his religious beliefs, and that he felt his work with Keston was part of a personal spiritual calling.

Bourdeaux's witnessing of the persecution of religious belief in the Soviet Union led to a lifetime of work almost entirely devoted to the publication of these abuses. He wrote a variety of monographs and extended commentaries on the position of religious beliefs in the Soviet Union. These include *Patriarch and Prophets, Religious Ferment in Russia, Opium of the People* and *Land of Crosses*.[579] Given the relative lack of academic focus on the state of religion in the Soviet Union, these works still form the basis of the historiography of religious persecution by the Soviet authorities. This is perhaps a strange legacy of Bourdeaux's writings, and one that needs revision given the opening of the state archives after the collapse of the Soviet bloc. Indeed, Bourdeaux recognises that it is time for this scholarship to be revised given that it has gone largely unchallenged, aside from political denunciations, for over forty years.[580]

Bourdeaux became notable for his public stance recognising the persecution of religious believers in the Soviet Union from the mid-1960s onwards. His work in the 1960s, before the creation of Keston, in publicising the plight of religious believers in the Soviet Union was criticised by various aspects of British society. Indeed, Bourdeaux recalls the 'outcry of horror' at the publication of *Opium of the People* in 1965, and the sense of disbelief at his accusations.[581] His work in studying and publicising the persecution of religious belief in the Soviet Union in this period led to the formation of Keston in the late 1960s, of which he played the leading role as its director. Bourdeaux continued to occupy a prominent position throughout the 1970s and 1980s,

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[579] M. Bourdeaux, *Patriarch and Prophets* (London, 1969); M. Bourdeaux, *Religious Ferment in Russia* (London, 1968); M. Bourdeaux, *Opium of the People* (London, 1965); and M. Bourdeaux, *Land of Crosses* (Chulmleigh, 1979).
[580] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010.
[581] Ibid.

and indeed aside from a short period away from active leadership of the group in the late 1990s and early 2000s, he remains as President to date.[582]

Another substantial part of Bourdeaux's work for Keston was as the group's figurehead. Part of this role involved travelling around the world spreading information about Keston and trying to attain as wide support as possible. Details of Bourdeaux's visits around the world can be seen in Keston's academic journal *Religion in Communist Lands* (RCL), with regular reports of his trips to America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, and the busy lecture tours that he undertook there.[583] In his tour of America and Canada, for example, Bourdeaux covered 14 towns in 23 days, where he delivered lectures primarily to Ukrainian communities who 'expressed great interest in the work of Keston College'.[584]

Given the academic approach that Keston took to its activism, it is perhaps unsurprising that a substantial part of its work was in the construction of an archive of primary material on religious persecution that occurred in communist states. This was primarily formed of *samizdat* pieces brought to Keston and its members by dissidents and concerned individuals. Xenia Dennen, the current Chairman of Keston and the editor of Religion in Communist Lands – Keston's academic journal – from 1973 to 1980, keenly stresses the centrality of this archive to Keston's purpose. In discussing the publication of material from Keston, she stated:

> We do not put out any information unless its based on properly researched [material], its gotta be based on documentation wherever possible which is why right from the start we started building up the archive. The archive is an absolute central part of the structure of Keston.[585]

This need for academic rigor has also been echoed by other leading members of Keston, including Philip Walters, the former Head of Research and Executive Director. Walters concurred with Dennen's remarks, noting that Keston positioned itself as 'a thoroughly reliable source of

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[582] See Keston promotional leaflet (received by the author from Xenia Dennen, the current chairman of Keston, on 21 May 2010), and Keston Newsletter No. 10, (2009) (available online at http://www.keston.org.uk/newsletter.php accessed 23 June 2010).
[583] See M. Bourdeaux, 'News from Keston', RCL, Vol. 2, No. 3, (1974) p. 28; and M. Bourdeaux, 'News from Keston', RCL, Vol. 4, No. 4, (1976) p. 52.
[584] M. Bourdeaux, 'News from Keston', RCL, Vol. 4, No. 4, (1976) p. 52.
[585] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010.

information backed up by scrupulous research and objective criteria of academic quality'.[586] The ostensible obsession for empirical rigour and corroboration of material compiled in Keston's archive is perhaps indicative of its wider aims. The integral part of Keston's work was the establishment, and maintenance of, a resilient academic reputation that would survive attacks on its impartiality. Without this reputation, the work that Keston was doing in publicising material and information about religious persecution would have been derided as myth or politically charged accusations. Establishing a reputation for scholarly neutrality through focusing carefully on documents was seen as the best defence against accusations of taint or bias, with material available to defend their position. An example of this can be seen in the attack on Peter Reddaway's article 'The Georgian Orthodox Church: Corruption and Renewal', by David Lang, a Professor of Caucasian Studies at the School of Oriental and Asian Studies, University of London.[587] In a letter to *The Times*, Professor Lang critiqued Reddaway's use of primary sources in his article on the Georgian Orthodox Church, noting that academics at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London had not had the opportunity to consult this material, which was held by Keston.[588] Lang continues, noting several errors in Reddaway's article, and concluded that he was baffled by the focus on the Georgian Church by the Western press. Reddaway's responded to these accusations by claiming that Lang had been informally invited to consult these documents at Keston by Michael Bourdeaux, and reiterated that articles in RCL noted that photocopies of these documents were available for consultation.[589] Reddaway continued in this article to stress the array of checks that were carried out on these primary documents before they were published, something which Lang failed to mention. It is interesting that in response to this, Lang further critiques a piece of documentary evidence used by Reddaway, and then seeks to distance himself from Keston, stating that he had no connection to the group, had not been invited to consult its materials, and had no ability to check or censor its

[586] Interview with Philip Walters, 19 May 2010.
[587] P. Reddaway, 'The Georgian Orthodox Church: Corruption and Renewal' RCL, Vol. 3, No. 4-5, (1975), pp. 14-23. Coverage of the debate between Reddaway and Lang, which mainly occurred in *The Times* can be found in 'The Georgian Church: A Controversy', RCL, Vol. 3, No. 6, (1975) pp. 45-54.
[588] D. Lang, 'Church of Soviet Georgia', *The Times*, 11 August, 1975, p. 11.
[589] P. Reddaway, 'Church of Soviet Georgia', *The Times*, 16 August, 1975, p. 13.

publications.[590] This matter also drew the attention of Lambeth Palace, who later sought to maintain the reputation of Lang whilst supporting Reddaway's claims and material that it was based upon.[591] Although this particular episode is academic in its focus, the reliance on empirical sources as Reddaway's primary defence, and the later support of this evidence by Lambeth Palace, is indicative of the wider guarding of Keston's output. The need to maintain this academic rigour was especially important in the ideological context of the Cold War, and perhaps explains why this stance is so ingrained in Keston's leading members to this day.

The material contained within the Keston archive is testament both to the reputation that Keston built and to the work of its members. Not only does it contain an array of *samizdat* material smuggled out of the Soviet Union and sent to Keston, but also an array of press cuttings from the Soviet press about the persecution of religion. Indeed, the impressive material collected by Keston has established an essential archive on the persecution of religion in the Soviet Union for scholars. Bourdeaux considers this archive to be of such importance that he claims that 'when the church history of the second half of the twentieth century comes to be written, Keston's archive will reveal the full story to the world'.[592]

The bold claim of the central importance of this archive is perhaps not an overstatement when it is considered that Keston were one of the only organisations in the West that were collecting material on the persecution of religious believers in the Soviet Union in this period, and were certainly the most active. The 'full story' of religious belief in the Soviet Union in the later Twentieth century is likely to be constructed by scholars in the future utilising this collection, and the Soviet archives themselves, notably the papers of the Council for Religious Affairs and its predecessors. The Keston archive is undoubtedly an important collection of material regarding the position of religious belief in the Soviet Union, and something that shaped the activism of the organisation.

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[590] D. Lang, 'Church of Soviet Georgia', *The Times*, 21 August, 1975, p. 13.
[591] See C. Longley, 'New evidence in the Georgian church affair', *The Times*, 15 March, 1976, p. 14.
[592] Bourdeaux, 'Ringing the Changes', p. 3.

In its position as a research body, another integral part of Keston's work was the publication and distribution not only of translations of *samizdat*, but also commentaries on the position of religious belief in communist states. Keston had a wide array of publications in the 1970s and 1980s, building on the work that Bourdeaux had started in the 1960s. These publications made vast use of the Keston archive, and regularly included large segments of primary documents, translated from their native language by Keston's staff. Examples of the types of works that were produced by Keston include Dick Rogers' *Irina*, Georgi Vins' autobiography *Three Generations of Suffering*, and Rosemary Harris and Xenia Howard-Johnston's *Christian Appeals from Russia*.[593] The Keston series of books, as listed in full in Appendix 4, shows the breadth covered by Keston's publications. This list of works clearly shows that Keston's output was not solely focused on one particular denomination, although it certainly contained a predominantly Christian focus. Indeed, this Christian focus arguably derives from the Christian foundations of the group and the faith of its members. The distinct lack of publications on the position of Islam, Buddhism and Judaism is perhaps a strange omission in Keston's output given the level of believers of these faiths within the Soviet Union. This omission is even more striking when claims of the importance of the Keston archive is taken into consideration. It is either the case that Keston's archive does contain material on these religions, but that no researchers affiliated with Keston in the 1970s and 1980s wanted to publish on them or that there is no material in the archive on this area. Either position suggests that the focus of Keston was on the publication of material related to the Christian faith and the compilation of material on that area, a position which is at odds with the claim to study all religions. Keston can certainly be seen as an organisation that was driven primarily by Christian faith, something which is evident in their publications.

From an academic perspective the most important pieces produced by a Keston member were the works by Jane Ellis, a Senior Researcher at Keston and Editor of RCL, on the Russian

[593] D. Rogers, *Irina* (Tring, 1987); G. Vins, *Three Generations of Suffering* (Reading, 1976); and R. Harris and X. Howard-Johnston, *Christian Appeals from Russia* (London, 1969). Howard-Johnston is Xenia Dennen's maiden name.

Orthodox Church. Both *The Russian Orthodox Church: A Contemporary History* and *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* are rightly considered as key pieces in the historiography of religious dissent in the Soviet Union.[594] It is perhaps to the testament of Ellis' work that these pieces are also still considered by many academics as the most informative pieces on the Orthodox dissent in the Soviet Union to date. Had it not been for her untimely death in 1998 it is likely that this high quality of work would have continued, something that many involved not only with Keston but also with other groups who researched religion in the Soviet Union in this period have recognised.[595]

Keston supplemented the publication of books by producing a variety of periodicals, including the quarterly academic journal Religion in Communist Lands (RCL). This was one of the first journals to directly focus on the issues of religion in communist countries, and played a substantial role in increasing its reputation as an academic body. RCL was launched on 27 February 1973 at a press conference on Fleet Street, and was reputed to have been met with much interest from the secular and religious press alike.[596] The first issue had 9,000 copies, with around a third of these being sent as complimentary copies to a variety of religious groups, perhaps illustrating a significant area where Keston felt that its support lay and where it sought to build up more support from.[597] RCL was declared as the 'focal point for the establishment of fact and forum for discussion of all aspects of religion in communist countries'.[598] It was a synthesis of Keston's work into the format of an academic journal. Indeed, RCL was not only an important way in which Keston attempted to cement its academic foundations, but also an important journal for the study of religion in the Soviet Union and other communist states. In the first edition of this publication, it was recognised that this was the only publication that sought to promote the study of religion in the Soviet Union and other communist states, and to create 'a greater understanding

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[594] Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church* and J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* (London, 1996).
[595] See 'Death of a Leading Scholar of the Russian Church', *East-West Church & Ministry Report*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (Summer 1998) available at http://www.eastwestreport.org/articles/ew06304.htm (Accessed 25 June 2010).
[596] M. Bourdeaux, 'News from the Centre', RCL, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1973) p. 2.
[597] Ibid, p. 2.
[598] M. Bourdeaux, 'News from the Centre', RCL, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1973) p. 2.

of the religious situation in Eastern Europe'.[599] It could be argued that *Religion, State and Society*, the new name for the journal after the collapse of the Soviet Union, continues to occupy this unique position despite the widening area of interest as indicated by its title.

RCL is also notable for its attempt not to be a journal focused solely on becoming a record of persecution, such as other journals produced in this period including the *Index on Censorship*, noted for its reporting on freedom of speech issues around the world. RCL sought to 'cover all aspects of religious life, putting the persecutions and pressures in perspective whilst emphasising positive features'.[600] This is perhaps in stark contrast to the work of other religious groups working in this field, such as Richard Wurmbrand's Voice of the Martyrs, who were much more virulent in their rhetoric, perhaps due to the experiences of Soviet persecution by Wurmbrand himself.[601]

A brief consultation of the articles published in RCL, illustrates that they were not entirely focused on reports of religious repression. Articles were published on the resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church and on the development of new churches in communist states.[602] However, given the situation of religious belief in the Soviet Union, it was perhaps to be expected that the vast majority of articles were about the oppression of belief. RCL had its critics for this overly negative stance, notably The Revd Canon Paul Oestreicher, chairman of the British section of Amnesty. Xenia Dennen recalled Keston's output being attacked by Oestreicher, who accused the organisation of being right-wing and anti-Soviet. Dennen recalled that, 'our reply was well actually we're only giving the facts, this is the truth, if we could be provided with lovely positive stuff we'd be very happy to publish it'.[603] When this response is compared to the articles

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[599] M. Bourdeaux, 'News from the Centre', RCL, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1973) p. 2 – 3.
[600] Ibid, p. 3.
[601] See R. Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ* (London, 1967) Wurmbrand was a Romanian priest imprisoned for his religious beliefs. After his exile, he formed the Voice of the Martyrs, a group campaigning for the human rights of Christian prisoners of conscience. Wurmbrand took a particularly strong anti-Communist approach to his activism, arguing that Communism and Christianity were deeply incompatible.
[602] See, W. Alexeev, 'The Russian Orthodox Church, 1927-1945: Repression and Revival', RCL, Vol. 7, No. 1, (1979); and P. Gheddo, 'A New Church is Born under Persecution', RCL, Vol. 10, No. 2, (1982).
[603] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010. Oestreicher's relationship with Keston has reconciled in recent years. In a lecture at the 2010 Keston AGM, Oestreicher noted that he had 'no need to apologise to Michael [Bourdeaux]. I still think there were times when he was wrong. But he was right, absolutely right, in

published in RCL on the resurgence of faith in areas of the Soviet Union, it is doubtless that this claim is accurate.

The most frequent periodical published by Keston in this period was the Keston News Service (KNS). The KNS was started on 17 May 1974 with a trial edition that sought to replace the regular informal press releases that Keston had previously produced. Michael Bourdeaux, who was the initial editor of the KNS, stated that this service was to 'improve and formalize the output of up-to-the-minute information' from the college.[604] It is clear that the KNS was initially set up in order to streamline the previously informal links that Keston had with the press, and to build upon the more academic publications from the college. Initially aiming to have 15 copies published a year, the KNS soon became a substantial part of Keston's output, with over 200 issues published in its first decade of publication.

The KNS was clearly different to the other Keston publications, initially set up to provide information in the form of short news articles of the latest news of religious life in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. The very composition of the publication itself feels like a 'rushed' publication, printed on thin yellow paper with the utilitarian font of a typewriter, which gives the impression that these articles were so 'hot off the press' that there was little time for professional formatting. To an extent, the rushed feel of the KNS is comparable to the amateur appearance of the 35's regular bulletin. Both of these publications contained the most up-to-date material on Soviet dissenters, and the need to distribute this widely clearly took priority over professional editing and production.

In his editorial in the first edition of the KNS, Bourdeaux echoes this hasty publication process and insisted that the KNS must be a '*samizdat* experience'.[605] This is an interesting turn of phrase as not only does it neatly describe the process of the in-house publication of the KNS, but also the potential assimilation with the dissidents that Keston reported on. This statement

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his single-minded battle for religious liberty in the Communist world'. For the full text of this lecture, see P. Oestreicher, 'Walking a Tightrope: Peace and Justice in Christian Cold War Diplomacy', *Keston Newsletter*, No. 13, (2011) pp. 19-21.

[604] M. Bourdeaux, 'Editorial', KNS, No. 1 (Trial number), 17th May 1974, p. 2

[605] Ibid, p. 2.

suggests that at its foundation, the KNS was not only as a way of reporting on dissidents, but a way of Keston becoming active as dissidents themselves. Given the important role that *samizdat* played in the Soviet dissident movement, attributing the KNS in such a manner can be seen as a personal identification with the dissidents themselves.

The KNS's output increased dramatically in its first decade of publication. Initial editions contained one to eight news articles, numbering no more than eight pages. From mid-1978, however, individual editions of the KNS become substantially larger. From number 90, dated 25 January 1980, onwards this expansion continued with a slight change of format, and with Alyona Kojevnikov, Keston's Information Officer, replacing Bourdeaux as its editor. This new format included a selection of commentary articles on religion in totalitarian states, translations of *samizdat* documents, and biographical pieces on prominent religious figures in the Soviet Union and Soviet bloc. This new format was used alternately with the older format of news articles. The growth of the KNS was rapid from this point, with single editions in the 1980s regularly containing over ten articles over fifteen pages. The significant growth in the output of the KNS can be attributed to a variety of factors. The amount of *samizdat* that made its way from dissidents in the Soviet Union to Keston is likely to have increased throughout the 1970s and 1980s as it built up a reputation as an organisation that would publish this material. Keston was constantly on a financial tightrope in the 1970s and 1980s and any substantial increase in its output was only due to an increase in resources. Given that the KNS was only available to subscribers, Keston's leadership clearly thought that it was able to expand this area of its publications without it becoming an unnecessary burden. It must also be noted that this increase in the KNS's output suggests that it was well received by its subscribers, and that there was a genuine demand for this information. It is unlikely that Keston, which was stretched both financially and in human resources, would devote much time or finance to a publication if it was self-indulgent and had a low readership.

Although the KNS was Keston's news output it was still heavily influenced by the religious beliefs of its members. Christmas and Easter editions of the KNS often contained cover pages with

Christian imagery. For example, the cover of No. 114, dated 22 December 1980 contains a picture of Mary as shown in Image 3.9, and No. 122, dated 24 April 1981, shows a crucifix with the phrase 'Christ is risen' translated into a variety of languages, as shown in Image 3.10. These images are particularly striking on the cover of a news service about the situation of religious belief in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. They are indicative of the religious motivations behind Keston's work, and clearly show the Christian beliefs of their leading members.

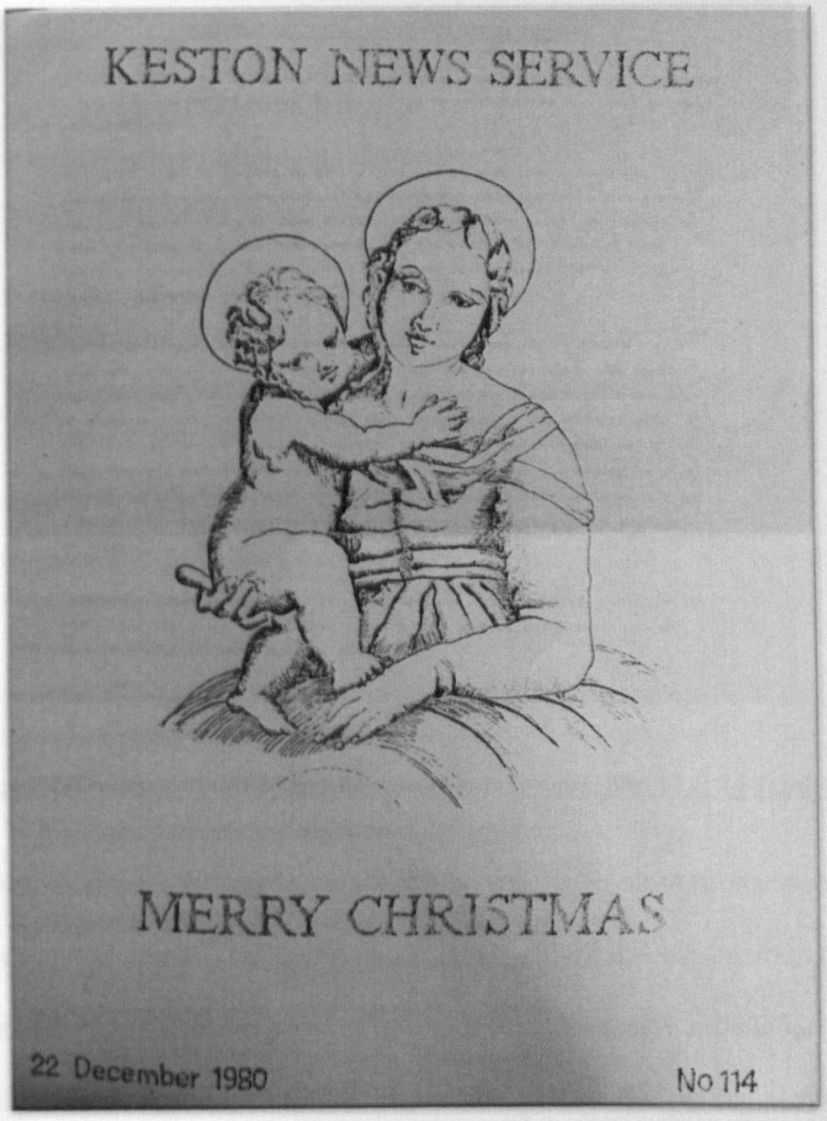

Image 3.9 – Front Cover of the Keston News Service, No. 114, 22 December 1980

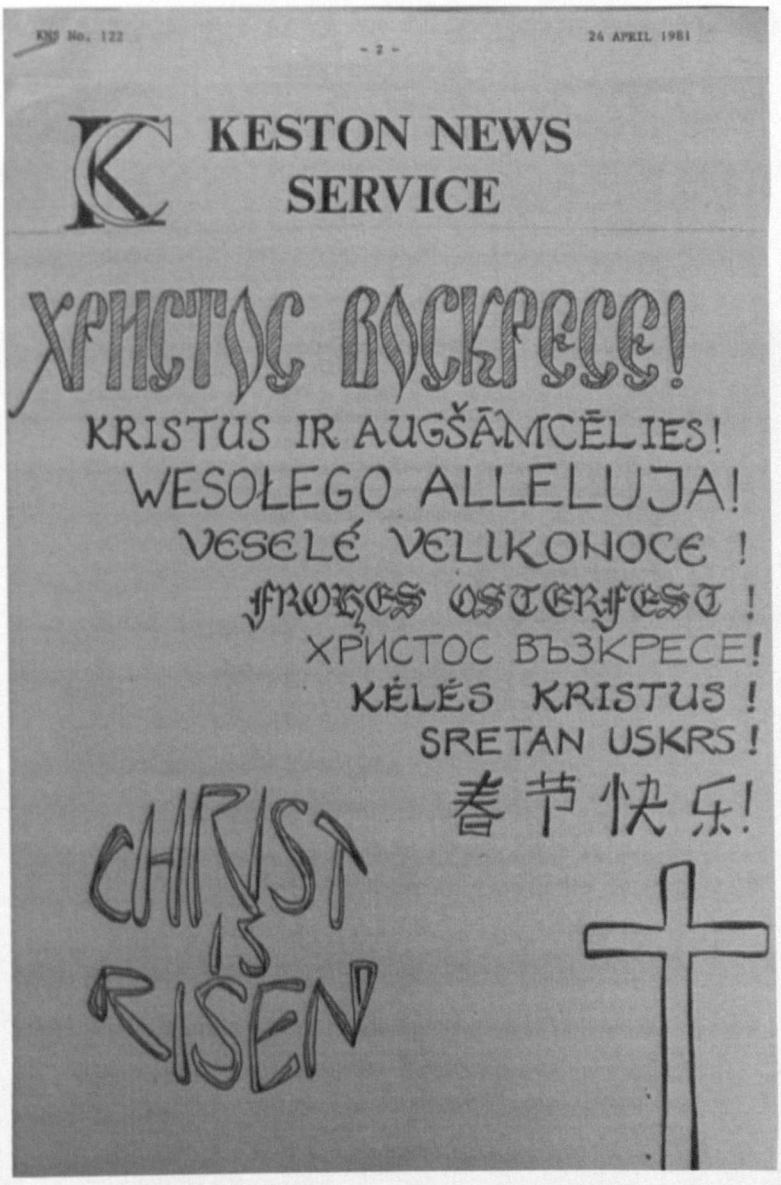

Image 3.10 – Front Cover of the Keston News Service, No. 122, 24 April 1981

The religious aspects of Keston's work can be seen even more prominently in their later publication *Frontier*. *Frontier* was first published in January 1987 and was an attempt by Keston to produce a magazine for the mainstream of its supporters. Its glossy production and magazine style of journalism marks it apart from KNS and RCL, clearly indicating a different type of audience. What is also notable about *Frontier*'s content is the level of religious imagery used throughout. These issues regularly contained prayer sections, such as the 'O Come let us worship' section in the November – December edition in 1987 as shown in Image 3.11. Another example of this type of religious content can be seen in the 'Prayer and Praise' section of the July-August 1992 edition of *Frontier* as seen in Image 3.12. This piece contains 31 targets of prayer, identifying

areas in the territory of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that they felt needed assistance. Although these examples occur after the scope of this research, they clearly illustrate the religious identifications of Keston's staff, something which, given the examples in KNS, existed in the 1970s and 1980s.

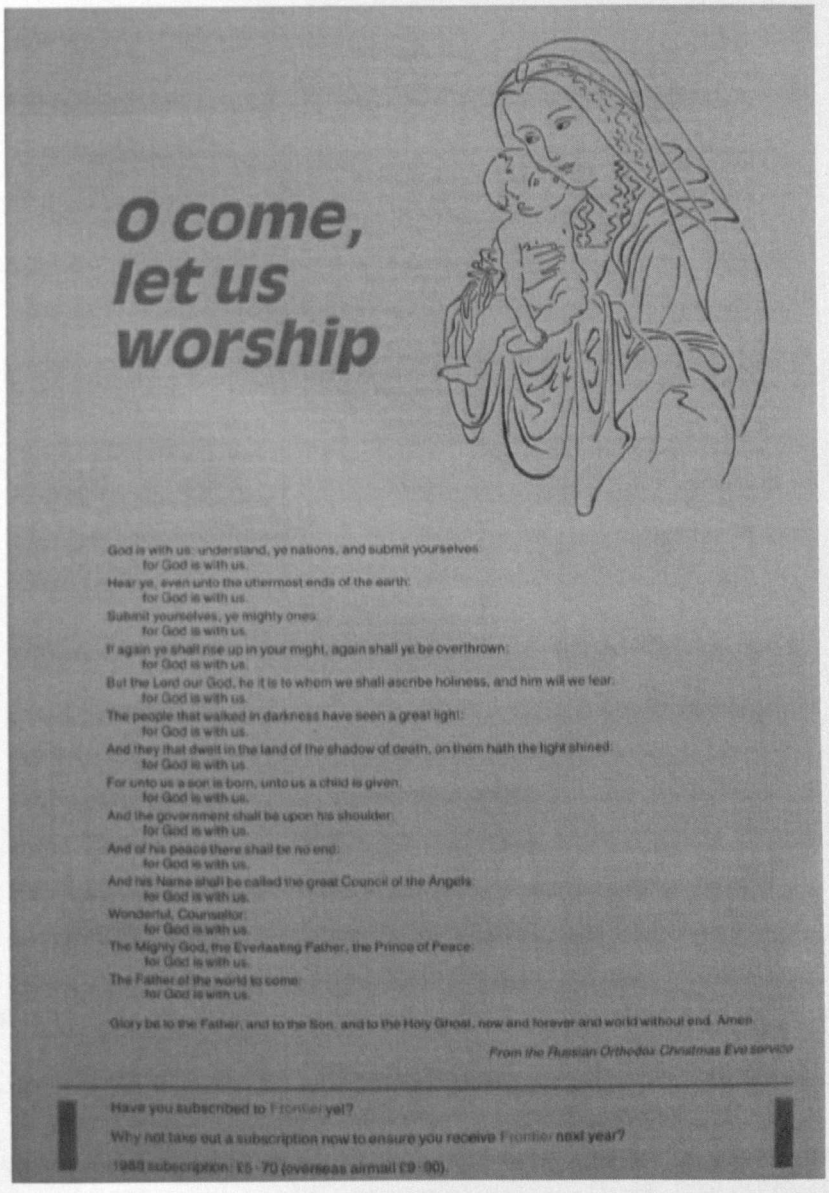

Image 3.11 – 'O Come, Let Us Worship', *Frontier*, November-December 1987

Prayer & Praise

Let us pray...

DAY 1. For wisdom to be granted to all those formulating new laws to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of Soviet rule.

DAY 2. Pray for God to protect Russians who are terrorised by the Moscow mafia. Pray particularly for Old Believers, whose churches are under siege by those wanting to sell ancient icons to the West.

DAY 3. Pray for all Christians and churches throughout Europe who are now in a position to affect law-making in the wake of communism. May He help them stand firm in defence of their beliefs.

DAY 4. Pray for the medical profession and the Catholic Church in Poland. Pray that the current debate on the right to abortion may not cause rifts either within the church itself or between the church and society.

DAY 5. May God bless and bring comfort to all prisoners throughout Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Praise Him for the new rights of Christian groups to visit prisons.

DAY 6. Praise God for the continued defiance in Tibet against imposed Chinese rule. May He protect those who defend traditional Buddhist beliefs and national tradition.

DAY 7. Today let us pray for China: westerners can only guess at how many millions of Christians today pray and worship together in the remote provinces of this vast country.

DAY 8. Pray for Moses Xie, one of China's best-known house church leaders, currently in prison after being arrested by the Chinese authorities.

DAY 9. Pray for a resolution to the controversy surrounding Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev, who has been defrocked by the Russian Orthodox Church, accused of collaboration with the state, and who refuses to leave his bishop's residence.

DAY 10. Many of those who had dealings with the East German secret police today have to face up to accusations of collaboration. May God help the country come to terms with its guilt without embarking on a witch hunt.

DAY 11. Pray for Chinese house church leader Lin Xiangao (Pastor Lamb), whose church has been threatened with closure.

DAY 12. Pray for Father Venceslao Padilla, who is to head a team of Catholic missionaries in Mongolia. Grant him and his colleagues sensitivity to the Buddhist traditions which are reviving in the country.

DAY 13. Fear rules the lives of Azeri and Armenian refugees affected by the conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. May the prayers for peace said by Christians throughout the world lead to an end to the battle.

DAY 14. Pray for Father Vasili Lapkovsky and his congregation in Kerch, Crimea, which has switched allegiance from the Russian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile. Pray for an end to discrimination against them.

DAY 15. Praise God for former prisoners of conscience who have played their part in bringing democratic reforms to the countries of Eastern Europe.

DAY 16. Praise God for the reopening of the Church of St John the Baptist in Crimea. Pray for a renewal of church life after so many years of disuse.

DAY 17. Pray for lay groups in Poland who provide help to pregnant women who decide to continue with their pregnancies despite social and economic pressures.

DAY 18. Pray for the work of German Lutheran pastor Joachim Gauck, who decides which information from the secret police files should be released to the public. May God bless him with discrimination and compassion.

DAY 19. May God protect those who find themselves still discriminated against by communists who continue to hold positions of power locally throughout Russia and Eastern Europe.

DAY 20. Pray for all charities which send aid to Russia. May God help them to be responsible stewards of donations intended for Russia, and grant them the wisdom to outwit unscrupulous Russians who seek to defraud them.

DAY 21. Thank God for the new atmosphere in Russia which enables a North Korean Christian to receive political asylum on religious grounds.

DAY 22. Praise God for the evangelical initiative 'Revival 92', and ask Him for His blessing for its three-day series of meetings in October this year.

DAY 23. A forgotten group of Christians used religious persecution as a means of spreading the gospel in Soviet prisons. Praise God and ask for His blessing on the True Orthodox Church in Russia, whose members worked devotedly to bring prisoners comfort.

DAY 24. May God bless the work of all pressure groups seeking to bring the plight of Tibet to the forefront of the western media.

DAY 25. Pray for the UN troops currently working to clear a way for humanitarian aid into the besieged city of Sarajevo, Bosnia. May God keep them from harm.

DAY 26. Pray for the Christian Information Service which was recently set up in Croatia to report on the plight of Christian groups throughout the warlorn former Yugoslavia.

DAY 27. Bulgarian Orthodox dissident Father Hristofor Subev has been consecrated bishop. Pray for his church, for the renewed Orthodox synod and for a peaceful resolution to the controversy over whether long-serving Patriarch Maxim should stand down.

DAY 28. Praise God for the Cambodian government's decision to recognise the Anglican Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches.

DAY 29. Pray for Christians and Muslims forced to participate in the ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia. There are rumours that some conscientious objectors have been persecuted or executed by ruthless military commanders.

DAY 30. Pray for educational opportunities for more pastors and priests to minister to Chinese believers, and pray that the Chinese state will allow more vocations to reach fruition.

DAY 31. Please pray for the continued work of Keston Research in Oxford, and particularly for the success of its Moscow office.

Is this the first copy of *Frontier* you've read? Are you interested in the news we cover? Why not take out a subscription now and make sure you receive *Frontier* regularly?

Annual subscription (six issues) £14.95 ($33.00) (students & OAPs £12); overseas airmail £19.95 ($39.00)

Send cheques and postal orders to Keston Research, 33a Canal Street, OXFORD OX2 6BQ, UK

Image 3.12 – 'Prayer & Praise', *Frontier*, July-August 1992

The public display of religious persuasion in Keston's publications puts their work into an interesting position. Given their desire to create an academic reputation for the reliability of their work, it could be argued that these public displays of faith may have detracted from their reputation for scholarly neutrality. In this light, it can be noted that Keston's work on the freedom of religious belief in communist lands was both carried out and seen through lens of Christian belief. Keston was both a Christian and academic body, with both aspects of its identity having a significant influence on the other.

Given the amount of effort put in by members of Keston's research team and leadership, and the amount of pressure they were under in their research, the motivations of the group are

important to consider. Keston was driven from its inception by the passion of its leading members. Bourdeaux played a substantial role in this, and it is clear that his religious faith was the predominant reason for his efforts. Bourdeaux's work in the formation of Keston and his own publications can be deduced to being driven by what he felt was the 'hand of God' putting him on this path.[606] These religious convictions were shared among the leading members of Keston, who were predominantly Christian. Indeed, as illustrated in the contents of the KNS and *Frontier* this Christian influence is clear. It must be noted that references to Bible passages and Christian imagery occur frequently throughout all of Keston's publications.[607] Religion had a clear influence on both the motivations of Keston, and on its output.

Like many human rights groups in Britain in this period, Keston's finances were an issue that often impacted on the group's ability to conduct its campaigns. Keston's financial struggles drew much wanted and unwanted attention to the institute. In the ideological context of the Cold war there were a multitude of bodies formed by the American and Soviet governments to assist cultural bodies that would work on their behalf. A notable example of this is the CIA sponsored Congress for Cultural Freedom, which funded several British literary journals in the 1960s, including the popular monthly *Encounter*. Once the financial backing of the Congress for Cultural Freedom became publicly known in the 1960s the reputation of the journals it funded greatly suffered.[608] Many staff at these journals swiftly resigned, notably Stephen Spender, the editor of *Encounter*, who went on to start the journal *Index on Censorship* with Michael Scammel in 1972.[609] The funding of journals and research bodies in the later half of the twentieth century is a way to assess any obvious ideological biases that may be contained within publications in the ideological context of the Cold War. This is an area that was of particular importance for Keston.

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[606] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010.

[607] For examples see M. Green, 'Foreword' in M. Bourdeaux and X. Howard-Johnston, *Aida of Leningrad* (Oxford, 1972); Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed*, pp. 1-10; M. Bourdeaux, 'Preface', in J. Popiełusko, *A Martyr for the Truth* (London 1985); and '1975 - A Year of Hope', KNS, No. 19, 12 December, 1975, p. 1.

[608] For discussion of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and other elements of covert cultural funding by the CIA in the Cold War see F. S. Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, (London, 1999).

[609] About section of the Index on Censorship website, available: http://www.indexoncensorship.org/About/ (Accessed 2 June 2010). For more on Stephen Spender, see J. Sutherland, *Stephen Spender, The Authorised Biography* (London, 2005).

The desire to maintain its independence as a research institution meant that its leadership were very careful about where its funding came from. Xenia Dennen noted that,

> We always insisted that we should never be controlled or influenced by anyone so our independence was absolutely central. So as far as I'm aware we never accepted money from any dirty source.[610]

Accusations of funding from 'dirty sources' were particularly harmful for Keston. The academic reputation of the organisation, and its publications, may have been in part due to the neutral position that it took, seeking to present facts rather than an ideological position. Being accused of being an anti-Soviet organisation in this period had linked connotations of being funded by the CIA, or one of its umbrella organisations such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom. If this was proven to be the case, the reputation of Keston would have been irreparably damaged, and it would have been considered as nothing more than another pawn in the Cold War. As a result of this, Keston refused to receive money from any governments, or government backed organisation, and made the entirety of its research publicly available. The group also refused to undertake research projects requested by funding bodies, and only accepted grants for research for which it had complete control over its direction.

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of accusations of being funded by 'dirty money' for Keston were the financial problems that the group faced. The 'News from Keston' section of RCL regularly called for donations from members throughout the 1970s and 1980s, seeking money and low interest loans not only to fund a move into larger premises, but also to keep the group afloat.[611] Bourdeaux noted in 1976 that Keston balanced its budget 'on a knife edge'.[612] Indeed, financial restraints meant that the publication of RCL was restricted to only two issues in 1981, followed by three issues a year from 1982 to 1987 in order to save costs, and there was a genuine threat of the group folding. When the accusations of 'dirty' funding are placed in this context, their sharpness can be fully understood by Keston's membership.

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[610] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010.
[611] See 'News from the Centre' and 'News from Keston College' sections in RCL from 1973 to 1988.
[612] M. Bourdeaux, 'News from Keston College' RCL, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1976) p. 51.

Keston raised the bulk of its finances from individual donations by its members who donated small amounts from £10 to £50 a year.[613] As Dennen put it, 'most of our funding was from private individuals who just were concerned about people in prison'.[614] It can therefore be noted that without this widespread support from its concerned membership, Keston would have been in an even worse state financially. This also offers a small insight into Keston's members who were not only willing to be paid up members on a yearly basis in the knowledge of the group's financial problems, but that many of them were willing to contribute extra finances when required. Although it is impossible to make accurate generalisations about all members of Keston in this period, it could be suggested that this shows that they were genuinely concerned about the religious persecution in the Soviet Union beyond a passing interest. The very fact that Keston survived financially throughout the 1970s and 1980s is arguably due to this concern from its membership.

Keston became particularly vulnerable to changes in circumstances financially due its policy not to retain any substantial savings. This was because any money that was raised by the group was ploughed directly into extending its research programme, primarily by recruiting more staff in unresearched areas. As a result of this policy, Keston's financial position was repeatedly dangerous in the 1970s and 1980s. This was seen as a risk worth taking in order for Keston to be operating at its maximum potential, something which when linked to the perception of a religious calling of many of its leading members, could be explained as a 'leap of faith'.

Keston's activities were presented to the wider public both through the active publication of material and through its involvement with media. Many of its researchers were often involved in television and radio shows as 'talking heads' with regards to human rights abuses and the position of religious belief in the Soviet Union. Michael Bourdeaux was prominent in this area, regularly appearing on BBC radio productions with regards to his work on religious freedom in the Soviet Union. Most notably, Bourdeaux gave the Lent Lecture on BBC Radio 4 on 2 March 1980

[613] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 24 February 2010.
[614] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010.

entitled 'What I have learned from Christians in Russia'.[615] This was a very prominent position for Bourdeaux to talk about his own experiences, but also in his capacity as Director of Keston College, which undoubtedly gave the group much publicity.

The position of Keston was significantly boosted in the first week of October 1983 when it was featured as 'The Week's Good Cause' on BBC Radio 4, an event that was seen to have led to a dramatic increase in turnout at Keston's open day that year.[616] Being 'The Week's Good Cause' had the effect of not only being a large appeal for much needed funding for Keston's projects, but also placed the output of Keston as reputable, something that lent the authority of the BBC to its research. In the wake of this appeal, Keston's members featured more prominently in the media. Most notable of these media appearances were the two television programmes on Keston that aired in January 1984. The first of these focused on the work of Alyona Kojevnikov, the Head of the Information Department at Keston, exploring the motivations for her work at Keston, and aired on Channel 4 on Saturday 28 January 1984. The second of these programmes focused on the personal aspect of Keston's work, looking at the individuals involved with the college and its support groups, which was aired on Channel 4 on Sunday 29 January 1984.[617]

Keston publications were often referenced by journalists in their own work on persecution in the Soviet Union. Bernard Levin's article 'Christian Voices in the Soviet Wilderness' makes much use of the Keston publication *Three Generations of Suffering*, which is referenced prominently.[618] Levin also refers to Keston in his other articles on the dissident movement, and directly referenced the KNS as his source of information.[619] Given the prominence of Levin's articles in *The Times* in the 1970s and 1980s, having a reference to their work may have enhanced the reputation of Keston at a national level. Having Keston's publications mentioned in such a position is also likely to have greatly assisted the publicity of the group. It could also be deduced

[615] 'For Your Information', KNS, No. 91, 7 February, 1980, p. 5.
[616] See 'For Your Information', KNS, No. 183, 22 September, 1983, p. 8 and 'The Unusual Event behind the Annual One', KNS, No. 185, 20 October, 1983, p.10.
[617] See 'Media interest in Keston College Growing', KNS, no. 190, 12 January 1984, p. 20.
[618] B. Levin, 'Christian Voices in the Soviet Wilderness', *The Times*, 20 February 1976, p. 14. Also see Vins, *Three Generations of Suffering*.
[619] See B. Levin, 'A revolution in the territory of the mind that even Soviet might cannot stop', *The Times*, 2 August 1977, p. 10.

that Levin's publication and recognition of the sources produced by Keston mean that his articles became a vehicle through which their findings and opinions became broadcast to a wider audience. This is in the same manner as the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry, whose information was put to a much larger audience than their protests could ever reach through Levin's articles.

From its formation, Keston did not intend to become a human rights organisation, deciding instead to focus on becoming a research centre to provide information for others.[620] Indeed, Keston were legally constrained by their position as a charity, which prevented them from emulating other more publicly active groups in this period such as the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry and Amnesty international. Keston's charity commission report states their purpose:

To promote the advancement of education in religion and to promote and encourage the study of and research into religion in communist states of states which have been communist or present or former totalitarian states.[621]

This statement legally constricted Keston to become a solely educational and research body. It is clear, however, that Keston's activities in the 1970s and 1980's went beyond the remit of their charity registration, and that they were more akin to other active pressure groups than the first glance would suggest. Indeed, describing Keston as anything other than active would be erroneous. Xenia Dennen argues that the group could not have been a more active organisation within the limits of their brief.[622]

The level of Keston's activism is perhaps not as obvious as other human rights groups formed in the later twentieth century due the way in which it was carried out. Given their charity status, Keston were unable to carry out the public demonstrations and protests that others, notably the 35's, used to inform the wider public about their research and the plight of religious believers in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s. Keston were forced to carry out their activism in a different manner, something which marked them apart from other human rights

[620] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010.
[621] Keston College Charity Commission report.
[622] Interview with Xenia Dennen, 21 May 2010.

groups in this period. An example of this can be seen in the delivery of documents and the spread of information to the British government. A substantial part of Keston's work involved the collation of *samizdat* materials from the Soviet Union and other communist countries. If this collation of material remained solely as an academic exercise, one could see that Keston was staying to its brief. However, these materials were often delivered to sections of the British government when they were considered important enough. This dissemination of material extended to the highest levels of government, with Bourdeaux personally delivering materials to the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, at 10 Downing Street.[623] The delivery of this material can only be described as a form of activism, and one that members of Keston were able to consider as part of their research. Bourdeaux was also involved in a series of seminars called by Thatcher at Chequers in late 1983 at which she had assembled an array of experts on different areas of the Soviet Union.[624] Bourdeaux was chosen to attend this meeting as a figure of expertise on human rights, personally chosen by Thatcher who decided against the recommendation of the Foreign Secretary and officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Bourdeaux attributes this personal selection to his regular appearances on the BBC Radio 4 Sunday programme, a broadcast he claims that Thatcher regularly listened to.[625] This illustrates the importance of Bourdeaux's media appearances in this period, and the way in which it allowed Keston to influence the highest levels of the British government.

Thatcher herself was a keen supporter of the work of Keston. On 25 April, 1984, she was the guest of honour at a reception held by Keston in recognition of Bourdeaux being awarded the Templeton Prize. At this reception, Thatcher noted the high regard in which she held the work of Keston, stating that she would 'take advantage of the work and personalities of Keston College' and that 'any Prime Minister would be foolish not to...any Prime Minister of any background.'[626] Thatcher's clear support of the work of Keston, and her insistence that all government leaders should utilise their material, leant much authority to its work. Thatcher's assertion that

[623] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 19 May 2010.
[624] Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* pp. 450-452.
[625] Interview with Michael Bourdeaux, 19 May 2010.
[626] 'Prime Minister attends Keston Reception', KNS, No. 199, 17 May 1984, p. 4.

governments should utilise the work of Keston was noted in Bourdeaux's speech at the same reception in which he stated that Sir Harold Wilson had 'sought advice from Keston College on religious liberty in the Soviet Union', and that Dr David Owen had invited representatives from Keston to attend a formal consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office before the Belgrade Review Conference in late 1977.[627] These examples illustrate the links that Keston had with the highest echelons of the British Government in this period, and the chances that they had to influence policy with regards to the Soviet Union.

Image 3.13 Margaret Thatcher at a Keston College reception held at Church House, Westminster, 25 April 1984

Keston's activism in the 1970s and 1980s can best be described as passive. It can be seen that the distribution of information from Keston in the form of their publications and links with the media gave others the ability to make more active protests about the persecution of religious

[627] Ibid, p. 4. Harold Wilson was the British Prime Minister from October 1964 to June 1970, and March 1974 to April 1976. David Owen was the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from February 1977 to May 1979.

believers in the Soviet Union. This position can be clearly seen in their work *Religious Prisoners in the USSR: A Study by Keston College* (1987). This publication is essentially a list of people imprisoned in the Soviet Union for their religious beliefs, broken down into different faiths and denominations. Among the information included for most of these prisoners included their personal details, information on their arrest, and their address written in Latin and Cyrillic scripts.[628] This list is supplemented by a section entitled 'How You Can Help', which gives clear instructions which are worth quoting in full:

> Send short, simple greetings to let them know that you care and are supporting them in prayer. Do not send long letters unless you first receive a reply. You may write in English, or copy one of the greetings given below onto your card and add a few words in English if you wish. Please remember never to make any remark of a remotely political nature, and NEVER mention Keston College, Aid to Russian Christians, or any similar organisation. This may prove to be harmful as a believer could be accused of having connections with a "Western anti-Soviet Organisation.[629]

This extract reveals much about Keston's activity in this period. Firstly, it must be noted that this is clearly a call for supporters of Keston to send letters to persecuted believers in the Soviet Union. This is notable as Keston's position as an educational charity and financial restrictions prevented them from taking this direct action. By providing a list of prisoners, addresses, and instructions on how to send appropriate material, Keston was doing all it could to be active in this process without sacrificing its position as an academic body which leant it a heightened reputation. This technique has obvious comparisons with the Amnesty model of letter writing to prisoners of conscience, and is undoubtedly something that Keston wanted to utilise. Keston's publications provided information that allowed others to protest on their behalf, including the addresses of persecuted believers and details about their position, something that doubtless facilitated the writing of letters to the Soviet authorities. Publishing these details allowed Keston to encourage direct activism by its supporters, without the organisation becoming directly involved in the activism, something that would have affected its charitable status and academic reputation. Although this extract is from a publication produced in 1987, there are clear

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[628] Keston College, *Religious Prisoners in the USSR: A study by Keston College* (London, 1987) pp. 70-149.
[629] Ibid, p. 154.

signs that this direct activism was encouraged in earlier editions of the KNS, with the regular inclusion of prisoners addresses in the Soviet Union. The process of letter-sending was also publicised in the KNS, which reported on a Keston display at the Edinburgh International Festival at which postcards were signed by members of the public and sent to Prisoners of Conscience in the Soviet Union.[630] In fact, in 1982 Bourdeaux called not only for letters to be sent, but also for those who visited the Soviet Union to meet persecuted believers, taking this activism a step further.[631]

It is clear that Keston was much more of an activist group than its academic structure and output suggested. Through the information it received, and its variety of publications, Keston sought to encourage others to conduct direct activism on behalf of persecuted religious believers in the Soviet Union. This allowed the group to maintain its academic reputation that had developed since its foundation, something that was essential for its publications to be taken seriously by journalists, politicians, and the wider British public. That its research was taken so seriously by these individuals, demonstrates not only the respect with which the group was held, but also the influence that it had on British perceptions of Soviet dissent.

[630] 'Keston Support Group at Edinburgh Festival', KNS, No. 130, 13 August 1981, p. 15.
[631] M. Bourdeaux, 'Some Personal Reflections', KNS, No. 147, 22 April 1983, p.3

Conclusion

In the ideological conflict of the Cold War, the soft power of human rights activism was a powerful force. The role of British human rights organisations, and their publication of reports of Soviet human rights violation, had an impact not only on the public consciousness of Soviet dissenters in Britain, but also on the outcome of the Cold War itself through their influence on official bodies, journalists and politicians alike. Snyder and Thomas are right to point out the key role that human rights played in the later stages of the Cold War. However, it is important to extend this analysis and look in detail at the activity of these organisations in order to fully understand the influence that they had.

This thesis has identified the actions of a variety of British human rights groups in three main areas, illustrating how campaigns led by these organisations had a direct influence both on the public awareness of Soviet dissenters and on official policy towards the Soviet Union. It has illustrated that Britain developed expertise in two major areas of Soviet human rights violation – the political abuse of psychiatry and the persecution of religious belief – and was home to the headquarters of Amnesty International, an internationally important human rights organisation. The activism of these groups marked the British response to Soviet dissent as internationally important, something that has been largely overlooked in the literature to date. This thesis has addressed the gap in the historiography surrounding the activism of these human rights groups, putting their work at the centre of analysis. This serves to develop the historiography of both the role of human rights in the Cold War, and given the way in which these groups operated, the historiography of Soviet dissent itself.

Amnesty International's work on the Soviet Union will be held in the historical record in relation to its wider campaigns for the forgotten prisoner of conscience. Amnesty is a unique organisation on both the national and international stage. From its birth in 1961, it has come to epitomise human rights campaigning. Amnesty shaped the way in which the international community has come to develop a human rights conscience in the twentieth century. This is

something that has had profound implications on international relations, especially so in the context of the Cold War.

Alongside its wider campaigns for the international respect of human rights, Amnesty's efforts for Soviet prisoners of conscience, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, should be seen as ground breaking and internationally important in their own right. Amnesty's research was at the forefront of British efforts in publicising cases of human rights violation in the Soviet Union, collating information on these abuses, and publishing material and comment on these cases. Without the high level of output and research from this group, the British perception of the Soviet dissident movement would be vastly different. Amnesty publications not only shaped what commentators, specialists and the general public knew about these political nonconformists in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, but their research has also formed a literature that shapes contemporary thought on the dissidents. The translation and publication of the *Chronicle of Current Events* made one of the most important sources on the position of dissidents in the Soviet Union readily available to English speakers around the world. This is something that had a dramatic effect on the public portrayal of dissidents in the 1970s and 1980s, and gave journalists, academics and politicians easy access to primary material written by dissenters. The translation of this material has also produced a collection of material that is ideal for English speaking students to use in studying the dissident movement in the Soviet Union. This is something that will undoubtedly come to influence the way in which generations of scholars will approach this period, illustrating how Amnesty's work continues to shape public perceptions of these individuals. The impact of the translation of the *Chronicle* should not be underestimated.

This thesis has outlined how material produced by Amnesty was used by prominent journalists such as Bernard Levin, who was clearly overwhelmed by the quality and content of their publications. The dedication of two articles of his column in *The Times* to comment on the Amnesty report *Prisoners of Conscience in the Soviet Union* in 1980 illustrates how such material influenced him, and undoubtedly others like him. It is clear that these publications had an impact on the public agenda regarding the Soviet Union in British culture in this period. Amnesty Urgent

Action reports and news releases also played their part in influencing this public agenda, adding urgency to calls for support for individual dissidents, often when it was needed most. That it was able to produce such a vast amount of quality research whilst its Soviet researchers were vastly overstretched with their work is testament to their commitment to their campaigns.

Of the groups covered by this thesis Amnesty was unique for a variety of differing reasons. By the early 1970s, it was arguably the only human rights group to have an international reputation, something it had developed before it seriously embarked on campaigns against Soviet human rights violation. This reputation was of the utmost importance, as without this, Amnesty's publication of the *Chronicle* and other *samizdat* materials would not have had the impact it did. The success of these publications can be directly linked to having Amnesty's name attached to them.

Amnesty was also unique in the fact that it had members based in the Soviet Union, most notably in its Moscow group. Attacks on Amnesty by the Soviet authorities occurred in two main forms – propaganda and the physical attacks on its members. Whilst all human rights groups in Britain campaigning against the Soviet treatment of dissenters were subjected to propaganda attacks, Amnesty was focused on in particular. The direct attacks on members of the organisation in the Soviet Union only served to heighten the emotions surrounding Amnesty's research. This served only to increase the resolve with which its researchers functioned, highlighting the crude nature of the Soviet attacks.

The political abuse of psychiatry is arguably the most horrifying of the ways in which the Soviet authorities dealt with political dissident in the 1960s and 1970s. The response to this barbarous treatment of political nonconformists unsurprisingly drew international criticism from scientists and psychiatrists alike. The use of these methods, and the particularly dubious diagnosis of sluggish schizophrenia in Soviet psychiatry was counter to all aspects of medical ethics, with the use of a medical treatment as a form of torture which directly contradicted the Hippocratic oath.

The role played by human rights organisations alongside these concerned psychiatrists is particularly interesting, and revealing of the wider role of these groups.

The developing public perception, and response to cases of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union can be neatly tracked through the differing response in Britain to the cases of Petro Grigorenko, Zhores Medvedev and Vladimir Bukovsky. These three individuals were incarcerated in *psikhushki* at varying times, and the response to their cases from the West reveal how perceptions of dissenters developed from the vague reporting of Grigorenko's case through to the widespread campaigns on behalf of Bukovsky in the mid 1970s. This is most clearly seen in the response to the Bukovsky papers sent to the West in 1971. The March 1972 letter to *The Times* by several prominent British psychiatrists which denounced the imprisonment of Bukovsky was in stark contrast to the response to Grigorenko's case in the late 1960s. This was a process that clearly accelerated throughout the 1970s, that culminated in the international pressure, led by the Royal College, on the AUSNP which forced their resignation from the WPA in 1983.

Public consciousness of the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union was bolstered in public culture by the first performances of Tom Stoppard and Andre Previn's *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* in July 1977. That such a prominent playwright and renowned conductor produced a play with such a central focus on a *psikhushka* and the forced treatment of a sane dissident suggests both how topical this issue was in the 1970s. EGBDF has become renowned as a classic work by Stoppard, and enjoyed a successful run at the National Theatre in 2010. EGBDF built on the impact that Valery Tarsis' *Ward 7* had had on some individuals. Despite being less publicly known, *Ward 7* clearly had an impact on the developing public awareness of the Soviet abuses in Britain.

Analysis of the Medical and Scientific Committee for Soviet Jewry highlights how important networks were to British human rights groups in this period. This group was clearly set up initially by the prominent Jewish politician Greville Janner to mobilise support from the

scientific community in Britain for the *refuseniks*. However, the organisation quickly shifted its focus to psychiatric abuse due to the scientific interests of its members.

The Working Group was arguably the most important group active in highlighting the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. This group, formed in response to the Bukovsky papers, published a regular bulletin on the abuse of psychiatry. Driven largely by the work of Peter Reddaway and Gery Low Beer, the Working Group was academic in its approach to reports of abuse, collating information, forming opinion on it, and distributing reports far and widely. Its main source of influence, as noted above, were the links that it had with the Royal College through the SCPAP. Its influence on this committee shaped the policy of the Royal College towards the Soviet Union, something that in turn put a huge amount of pressure on the AUSNP and the Soviet regime. The Working Group's regular bulletin on the position of psychiatry in the Soviet Union was clearly influential in the SCPAP and other concerned organisations. The Working Group managed to successfully harness concern for the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union from British psychiatrists, using their reputation to further publicise their concerns in the national and scientific media.

The Working Group's merger with other groups concerned with the political abuse of psychiatry, including the more activist CAPA, to form IAPUP continued the influence of this group into the late 1980s. IAPUP played a key role in the establishment of psychiatric treatment in the post-Soviet nations throughout the 1990s, and continues to monitor the quality of this treatment in its current guise as the Global Initiative on Psychiatry.

Analysis of the Royal College's Special Committee on the Political Abuse of Psychiatry, which formed in 1978, reveals how influential human rights activists and concerned psychiatrist were on the policy of the Royal College towards the Soviet Union. The first motion calling for an official condemnation of the Soviet use of psychiatry in the Royal College was brought by Harold Merskey and Gery Low-Beer, two individuals heavily involved in human rights groups campaigning for Soviet dissidents. The SCPAP also had clear links with Amnesty International, with a member

of Amnesty's staff established as a liaison officer between the two groups. SCPAP's membership was dominated by individuals linked to human rights groups, and it would not be an overstatement to suggest that the overall direction of the group was shaped by these individuals. This is particularly interesting as the first meeting of the SCPAP set out that the committee was to have no formal links with other organisations. This highlights the importance of human rights organisations for the information that they could provide to groups such as the SCPAP, reiterating the influence that they held over public discourse regarding the dissident movement.

Alongside psychiatric abuse, British human rights groups developed an internationally renowned expertise on the position of religious belief in the Soviet Union. Several groups formed in the West to either support religious believers against the state atheism of the Soviet regime both through financial and material support, and also by petitioning governments and official bodies on their behalf. Given the emotional links between believers of the same or similar faiths, this display of support was perhaps unsurprising. What is particularly interesting in the British context is how these groups adopted vastly different campaigns on behalf of religious believers, despite being based on common aims and origins.

The 35's gained many plaudits for their active campaigning style which sought to attain as much public exposure for the plight of *refuseniks* as possible. Yet the stage invasions and dramatic public demonstrations by this group were underpinned by an empirical base, with the collation of material from the Soviet Union at the centre of their activism. Michael Sherbourne's frequent and lengthy conversations with *refuseniks* provided the 35's with regular information on the position of dissenters in the Soviet Union, something that was clearly utilised in their dealings with the press and the wider public. Sherbourne's influence on the construction of the British discourse on these dissidents should not be underestimated. On a literal level, he coined the term *refusenik* which has entered the British lexicon as the term used to denote Soviet Jews who had been refused exit visas. On a more subtle note, the information that he distributed to the 35's and to other interested parties such as Bernard Levin was arguably the main, and most up-to-date information on the *refuseniks*. The information attained by Sherbourne, and distributed by the

35's in regular bulletins and at demonstrations gave them a reputation for expertise regarding the plight of the *refuseniks*. This ensured that although their protests were ostensibly outlandish, the information that they supplied and protested about was widely recognised as reputable.

Alongside good links with MPs such as Greville Janner, the 35's developed strong relationships with British politicians, particularly the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. This was something that was highly valued by the 35's, and this relationship is a clear indication of the influence that these activists had on the highest levels of the British government. Thatcher's request to the 35's for information on *refuseniks* to be passed onto the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is indicative both of the respect that the Prime Minister had for the information the 35's collected and of the good relationship that she had with the group. This was a clear instance of the British government using a human rights group to attain the most up-to-date information on Soviet dissent.

In contrast to the 35's, Keston College was on face value a much more academic organisation, something that is explicit in its name. Keston was formed as an organisation to assess and analyse the position of religious belief in communist lands, and adopted an academic style to its activism. It concentrated on collecting material from the Soviet Union, mainly in the form of *samizdat*, and on the publication of commentary and extended analysis on its research. Academic rigour was clearly at the centre of this groups work, something that is stressed by all of its leading figures. This academic approach can be seen in its array of publications, including many specialists texts on aspects of religious faith in the Soviet Union, and the journal RCL which still holds international respect in its current guise *Religion, State and Society*. The KNS was the main way in which Keston disseminated evidence regarding the persecution of religious believers to a wide audience. This regular bulletin was utilised by journalists, academics and politicians alike, and was one of the main sources of information regarding religious belief in the Soviet Union.

The level of publication from Keston on the position of religion in the Soviet Union increased its own reputation and that of its leader, Michael Bourdeaux. Bourdeaux developed

from a self confessed 'renegade priest' in the 1960s to the being awarded the Templeton Prize in 1984, a clear indication of how dramatically his reputation changed. This increased reputation included links with Downing Street, where Bourdeaux developed links with Margaret Thatcher and advised her on religious persecution in the Soviet Union. His role at a series of seminars at Chequers on the Soviet Union are a clear indication of the influence that he and Keston had at the highest levels of government.

On face value, The 35's and Keston could not be more different in their campaigns. Yet beneath the surface it is clear that these organisations held empiricism at their core, and utilised their relationships with the British government to further their cause. Both of these organisations had a significant influence on the way in which the British discourse on the Soviet persecution of religious faith was constructed through their activism and their relations with politicians of the highest rank.

Whilst all the groups covered in this thesis varied in their approach to Soviet dissenters, they all held empirical methods at the very core of their activism. Groups such as Keston, the Working Group and Amnesty based their campaigns on the collation and dissemination of information from the Soviet Union. Even the more demonstration focused groups such as the 35's and CAPA were based heavily on factual information, and the collection of this material from the Soviet Union. Empirical evidence of the personal circumstances of dissidents dominates the material produced by these organisations, and clearly played a significant role in the direction that these groups took. The collection of *samizdat* materials and other materials from behind the Iron Curtain dominated the day to day running of these organisations. This information was translated, analysed and repackaged in the form of journal articles, press releases and other publications by these groups. It is clear from the analysis of groups in the three main areas of this thesis that information was key to their campaigns, something that took a prominent place not only in their output, but also in the way in which these groups functioned.

The collation and distribution of information on the dissident movement by these organisations has shaped the way in which English-speaking scholars approach the Soviet human rights violations of this period. When the scale of work of these groups is taken into account alongside the influence they had on official organisations, it is of no surprise that the bulk of English material regarding the dissident movement is derived in some part from these organisations. This includes the translations of the *Chronicle*, arguably the key source of information regarding the dissident movement. Virtually all publications regarding the persecution of religious believers in the Soviet Union have links to Keston College. Keston's archive, now housed at Baylor University, Waco, Texas, contains one of the largest collections of material on religious persecution in the Soviet Union. It is the main repository of information available on this area in the West, and has been born out of decades of work.

The central focus on information by these organisations goes some way to highlight why they played such a prominent role in the construction of the British discourse on Soviet dissenters in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The flow of information from behind the Iron Curtain to the West was limited by the censorship of the Soviet regime. Information that did come out via *samizdat* and other underground means had a variety of issues regarding its reliability. Indeed, any information on the position of political non-conformists in the Soviet Union was liable to an array of biases rendering it very difficult to use.

British human rights organisations formed a key conduit of information from the Soviet dissident movement to the British public and the wider international community. They did this in two major ways. Firstly, on a logistical level these organisations gathered the material from a variety of sources from behind the Iron Curtain. Given that there was a vast array of material which came from the behind the Iron Curtain detailing human rights abuse, these groups focused the import of this material. Keston, for example, was inundated with material passed onto them by individuals and other organisations. Amnesty also became a focal point for the distribution of information. This organisation of material allowed *samizdat* to be collated by groups who could deal with this information. In some cases, these organisations attained material on the position of

dissidents directly from the Soviet Union. Michael Sherbourne's telephone conversations with *refuseniks* are a good example of this, which in some cases produced the first details of when a dissident's position changed. The connections that Peter Reddaway had with the Soviet Union, mainly through journalists and student visitors, are another way in which the most up-to-date information on the position of dissidents came to the West . Reddaway once received a copy of the *Chronicle of Current Events* less than 24 hours after it had been typed by its editors in Moscow.[632] Whilst this is an extreme case, it is clear that through these routes, the latest information on dissenters could travel past the Iron Curtain. Human rights activists were in the position to present this information to the British public consciousness through their links to journalists, politicians and official bodies alike. The development of these channels of information were essential in the context of the Cold War for gaining a picture of the situation behind the Iron Curtain.

Secondly, these organisations acted as a sort of filter, offering reliability to the material that they had received by publishing it in a variety of forms. In some instances, the reproduction of *samizdat* material alone was enough to cut through the high levels of propaganda of the Cold War. However, without context, this material was unlikely to have been met with interest by the wider public. Human rights group added a degree of authentication to this information in several different in forms. In some instances, such as the case of Keston and the Working Group, scrupulous levels of research and corroboration from a variety of sources added respectability and reliability to previously dubious sources. Psychiatrists such as Gery Low-Beer and Sidney Bloch, and the Sovietologist Peter Reddaway played a key part in the verification and authentication of the Bukovsky papers in the early 1970s. No matter how devoted the Working Group, and other organisations who worked to publicise the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, without this support these papers would have been largely ignored by British society. Amnesty used their reputation as a prominent and trusted human rights organisation to underline the reliability of *samizdat* materials. In particular, the translation and publication of the

[632] Interview with Peter Reddaway, 8 September 2011 .

Chronicle under its own name was crucial in the journal being accepted as a credible source in the West. Had the *Chronicle* been produced by another organisation without such an esteemed reputation, it was likely to have been ignored by the mainstream media.

These groups refined the array of material that they had access to from the Soviet Union, both official and unofficial, to produce an account that was as close to the truth as was possible in the international context of the day. Whilst British human rights groups played a key role in attaining information from behind the Iron Curtain, they should not be considered solely as a Cold War postal service. The most important role that these groups played was in ensuring that this information was trusted as reliable, something that was of extreme importance in the context of the Cold War.

The success of campaigns based on materials from the Soviet Union was based largely on the reputation of those who supported the campaign. This is where British human rights groups were very effective, gaining the support of specialists, politicians and celebrities to aid their position. Many prominent individuals from British society were associated with these groups, even if only in name. This went some way to improving the standing of these organisations, and made them more persuasive to the public at large. Human rights organisations gave a sense of clarity to the murky picture of Soviet human rights violation, an image that had been made unclear by decades of Soviet propaganda and pro-Soviet organisations in the West.

The fact that these human rights organisations fulfilled this role of arbiter of this information put them in an immensely powerful position when the construction of the public consciousness of Soviet dissidents in Britain is considered. The control that these organisations had over the flow and reliability of information from the Soviet Union gave them the ability to shape the public agenda regarding the Soviet Union in Britain.

The positioning of these human rights groups as the bridge between the Soviet Union and the West gave them a powerful role in how information on the dissidents was 'packaged' and distributed to the public. This is particularly so when it is noted that journalists, official bodies,

and in some cases the British government, held the publications of these groups in particular high esteem. The decisions of these bodies, and the articles written by journalists regarding the dissident movement, therefore, were directly influenced by the manner in which these human rights groups presented their material. Whilst it would be erroneous to say that, for instance, the policy of the Royal College regarding psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union or the articles of Bernard Levin were directly controlled by the output of human rights groups, it is clear that these publications had a direct impact on the direction of both of these areas.

These human rights groups undoubted played a substantial part in the way in which the British public was presented with details about the human rights violations in the Soviet Union. Not only did these groups ensure that this information was collected from appropriate areas, by adding reliability and authority to this material they also ensured that it was readily accepted by the British public at large. Without these groups playing this intermediary role, the position of dissidents would have remained largely unclear and confused. It could even be argued that had these groups not played this bridging role between the Soviet Union and the British public, it is likely that the plight of dissidents would have been largely ignored in the West. These groups clarified the available information, adding a much needed air of reliability to it, essentially making it believable by the wider British public. Whilst this might appear a basic role on the surface, this is something that should not be underestimated in the context of the ideological conflict of the Cold War

Whilst this thesis has broken down analysis of British human rights groups response to Soviet dissent into three distinct sections, it is clear that the reality of the situation was more complex and overlapping. Relationships between organisations and individuals are a factor that add another dimension to the developing public consciousness regarding dissenters in this period. There are individuals who have been discussed in the course of this thesis who, although contributing in significant ways to one of the three areas discussed, are impossible to isolate to any one of these sections.

The overarching relationships between organisations suggests that it is more appropriate to discuss these separate, and often distinctive groups, as forming part of a wider network, all working towards similar ends. This is in some senses counterintuitive, as the individual groups discussed in the course of this thesis appear to have such distinctive approaches to the issue of Soviet dissent that it would be wrong to compare them as the same entity. One only need consider the differences in approach, style, and output of Keston College and the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry to see how different these organisations were at face value. Yet despite this, the relationship between these organisations was very healthy.

One of the reasons that these organisations had such an impact on British public consciousness towards the dissidents is through their joint efforts. The fact that there were common relationships between groups may also have affected the spread of information on dissenters, being shared between groups as well as to the public. It is important in assessing the role played by human rights groups in this period to assess both the wood, the wider context of these groups, and the trees, the details of their campaigns themselves, together.

This thesis has focused primarily on the role played by human rights groups, although it is clear that in most cases these organisations were dominated and driven by the efforts of particular individuals. These individuals devoted substantial resources; time, money and perhaps most importantly emotion to their campaigns. Involvement with these organisations dominated the lives of several leading campaigners to the extent that their life stories are firmly intertwined with these groups. The fervour that these individuals held for their campaigns can still be keenly felt in interviews with these individuals two decades after the Soviet Union collapsed. This thesis has given many examples of the personal sacrifices of these individuals, showing how their efforts shaped the composition and position of British human rights groups in this period.

Peter Reddaway undoubtedly played an integral role in the network of British human rights activists. His direct involvement with the Working Group, Keston College and Amnesty, alongside personal links with other groups and activists clearly illustrate the development of a

network of activists, all working along similar lines. Reddaway can be described as a lynchpin of this network, connecting groups together through a distribution of information and personal relations. He effectively used his personal connections with dissidents and other individuals to ensure that a flow of up to date, and, perhaps more importantly, reliable information made its way to these organisations. That he was held in such high regard by these groups demonstrates the key role that he played, and the impact that he had on the development of the British discourse on Soviet dissenters.

That Reddaway was able to maintain this involvement with such as variety of groups is even more impressive when it is remembered that he held an academic position at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences throughout this period. Although there are clear links between his academic work and his activism, he was able to manage both of these demanding areas with apparent ease, highlighting the dedication with which he worked for Soviet dissidents. His academic position was undoubtedly a great advantage for him, giving him the deserved reputation of expertise which was utilised in his efforts. Reddaway's life is intertwined with the campaigns of British human rights groups working for Soviet dissidents, something that demonstrates how engaged he was in these campaigns, and the personal sacrifices that he had to make.

Michael Bourdeaux, like Reddaway, is another individual whose life has been totally shaped by his involvement in his work for Soviet dissenters. Unlike Reddaway, Bourdeaux's activism occurred virtually exclusively through Keston College, an organisation that is arguably best seen as a direct extension of his academic, personal and spiritual interests. It is not an exaggeration to note that Bourdeaux's commitment to Keston, and the personal sacrifices that he made effectively ensured that the organisation effectively documented the plight of religious believers in the Soviet Union. Whilst Bourdeaux didn't have the overarching influence on the network of human rights activists that Reddaway had, it is clear that he had a significant influence on the public consciousness of Soviet dissenters was strong. His reputation led to personal

meetings with Margaret Thatcher, which doubtless improved the stature of Keston, and promoted the plight of Soviet dissidents further.

It is easy to talk of these individuals 'sacrificing' their time and money in their campaigns for unknown dissenters on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Yet, given the emotion that was undoubtedly tied up with the efforts of these individuals, this term feels slightly out of place. Taking the 35's into account, it is clear that the work of this group was built on a strong relationships with *refuseniks* that could be described as familial. Michael Sherbourne's lengthy telephone conversations with *refuseniks* were based on an altruistic desire to help. These telephone conversations came to dominate the spare time that Sherbourne had, when he was not working as a teacher. The desire to help those in need arguably offset the huge impact on his personal time that these interviews took. Alongside Sherbourne's efforts, the 35's campaigns were driven by a group of impressively organised and driven women. The extravagant nature of their protests was something clearly shaped by the leading personalities of the group. Rita Eker and Margaret Rigal are both strong characters, who were deeply committed to their campaign, something that might go some way to explain its successes. This personal drive was arguably due to the recognition that any risk that a 35er faded into insignificance in comparison to the freedom of *refuseniks* for whom they campaigned for.

The role of the individual is also clear in the work of Amnesty International, which was born out of Peter Benenson's personal concern for prisoners of conscience around the world. Although this organisation is much larger and in some senses more bureaucratised than others covered in this thesis, the influence of individuals can be keenly observed in Amnesty's campaigns on the Soviet Union. These individuals are, on the whole, all but nameless in the archival material regarding their campaigns. Despite this, it is clear that Amnesty's Soviet researchers undertook a huge task in their work, investing personally in the output of the organisation. The demands placed on researchers such as Bruce Laird and Clayton Yeo, who both conducted their research on the Soviet Union alongside administrative roles in Amnesty's research department, were

extremely high. That they managed to produced such scholarship in these testing conditions is a testament to their personal efforts.

One gets a clear sense of frustration from reading Amnesty documents regarding the Soviet researchers. Not frustration out of the high level of work and demands of their positions, but a frustration with the inability to do more to help prisoners of conscience behind the Iron Curtain. This is revealing of the type of individual that worked for Amnesty, both in this period and arguably to this day. Involvement in such an organisation necessitates a genuine personal concern for the plight of political prisoners. This emotive concern goes some way to suggest why such an understaffed and ill-equipped team of researchers managed to produce such a vast amount of material in such a short period of time. Without the personal drive from these individuals, it is unlikely that such a quantity of material would have been produced.

All of the human rights groups covered in the course of this thesis are largely driven by the activism of one individual. Whilst the historiography on human rights in the Cold War has focused to date largely on the role played by international statesmen, there were another set of individuals that played a substantial part in the developing position of human rights. The important role played by these individuals should be noted as a key part of the campaign movement in Britain to publicise the persecution of dissidents in the Soviet Union. These individuals all had a committed work ethic combined with a strong motivation to dedicate a vast amount of personal, emotional and financial resource to their respective campaigns. Had this not been present, these groups would not have been as influential on public consciousness as they were. It is interesting to note that the emotional drive of these individuals did not come into conflict with the empirical method adopted by human rights groups in this period. Indeed, that such emotionally charged campaigns relied upon empiricism is doubtless linked to the overall success of these organisations.

Whilst the high level political negotiations are important, in the context of the Cold War, the role played by these activists was equally important in generating public support for human

rights. Not only did these activists, and the organisations that they ran, distribute the latest information on dissenters to all levels of British society, but they also utilised their positions to influence the decisions made by official bodies. In most instances, this influence reached the highest levels of British government.

Given the emerging literature on the role of human rights in the Cold War, it is essential to consider those in the West that campaigned to protect human rights in the Soviet Union. All of these groups challenged the accepted norms regarding the Soviet Union, and experienced personal hardships that could have ended their campaigns. It is a testament to these determined individuals that these groups were as successful as they were, and their efforts should rightly be acknowledged in the historiography of the Cold War.

There is much scope for further research into the international response to the human rights violation of Soviet dissenters. This thesis has focused on the period leading up to the dramatic political changes under Mikhail Gorbachev. The policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* changed the political composition of the Soviet Union beyond recognition, and played a substantial part in the collapse of the Soviet bloc. Dissidents came to occupy a dramatically different position in society, in some cases they occupied minor positions in government. The role played by international human rights activists clearly changed in this period, having to respond to the increasing liberalisation in the political arena. This thesis has highlighted the important role that human rights groups played in shaping British opinion on the Soviet dissident movement, and how they influenced official policy towards the Soviet Union, something that undoubtedly continued until the end of the Cold War.

The role that Soviet dissidents played in the Cold War is something that will undoubtedly occupy the attention of historians for many years to come. Human rights dominated international relations in the course of the Cold War, something that impacted on domestic political developments around the world. This thesis has demonstrated that the concern for human rights abuse in the Soviet Union mobilised activists in Britain, who impacted on the perception of

dissidents through their activism and directly influenced public opinion on their plight. Human rights activists in Britain held substantial influence over both the flow of information regarding Soviet dissidents, but also over the way in which official organisations responded to their plight. It is essential to consider the Soviet dissident movement in this light, remembering that their plight was not limited domestically. The Soviet dissident movement must be considered in an international context in order to fully understand the impact that they had in this period. Whilst scholarship on human rights in the Cold War to date has focused predominantly on statesmen and high-level political interactions, it is clear that there was an undercurrent of human rights activism in Britain that was influential on these international developments. These human rights groups played an important role in raising public awareness of Soviet dissidents in Britain, and their efforts should not be underestimated.

Appendix 1 – Amnesty International Source Material

This thesis has utilised an array of sources from several different repositories of Amnesty International's material.

Amnesty reference individual documents using a system of codes from around November 1972 onwards. For example, the 1979 report, *The Death Penalty. Amnesty International Report* was give the code ACT 50/003/1979. The first three letters of this code refer to the content of report. These three letter abbreviations cover the following areas:

- ACT – Action
- AFR – Africa
- AME – America
- ASA – Asia
- EUR – Europe
- FIN – Finance
- MDE – Middle East
- NR – News Release
- NWS - News
- ORG - Organisation

The series of numbers are unique to the individual document, ending with the year of publication. Where available, Amnesty materials referenced in this chapter include reference to this document code in square brackets alongside the archival repository in which it was used for this research. Documents referenced without this unique document code are denoted [No Ref].

References to Amnesty documentation in this chapter use the following abbreviations:

- IDC – Amnesty Microfiche collection produced by IDC, held at Marylebone Public Library.
- IEC – International Executive Committee
- IISG – *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis* (International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam)
- MRC – Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick
- UA – Urgent Action report

Appendix 2 – Royal College of Psychiatrists Telegram to APA and AUSNP

The Abuse of Psychiatry on the Basis of the Political Dissent[633] Communication from the Council of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 9th November 1973

Dr. A. M. Freedman,
American Psychiatric Association
1700 Eighteenth Street, N.W.,
Washington D.C., 200009, U.S.A

Professor A. V. Snezhnevsky
All-Union Society of Psychiatrists,
c/o Institute of Psychiatry of the Academy of
Medical Sciences of the USSR,
Zagorodnye shosse 2,
Moscow M-152.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is concerned at the reports it has received about the alleged abuse of psychiatry in the management of individuals who take up a position of political dissent.

Accusations have been levelled at psychiatrists in various countries and we appreciate that reports on such matters are liable to some distortion, particularly when they are transmitted by individuals unfamiliar with psychiatric practice. Nevertheless for humane and scientific reasons and in order to redeem the good name of psychiatry the world over, we consider it a matter of urgent necessity that practical steps should be taken in the immediate future. We would like, therefore, to ask colleagues in learned bodies in a number of countries, including your own, to join with us in the investigation of individual instances of alleged abuse. We have in mind an impartial commission of enquiry by a broadly based group of psychiatrists of high repute, drawn from a number of countries. In the long term task of looking at the wider ethical problems in this field, we are prepared to co-operate with any action taken by international organisations.

A similar communication has been sent to the E.E.C. countries, Scandinavia, and the USSR. We were committed by Council to taking this action. Letter following. Regards.

Sir Martin Roth,
President,
Royal College of Psychiatrists

[633] Copy of Telegram sent to Dr A. Freedman of the APA and Prof. A. Snezhnevsky of the AUNSP, 9 November 1973, RCPsych, SCOUPP Soviet Union.

Appendix 3 – Open Letter from Michael Sherbourne

THIS IS NOT AN INFORMATION SHEET. IT IS AN ACCUSATION[634].

What has happened to the campaign in this country on behalf of Shcharansky?

Why is there no screaming and no shouting? **OUR LEADERS ARE SILENT.** Our national council seems to be in hibernation.

We have a salaried Executive Director who gives the appearance of doing **NOTHING.**

We have a National Chairman who says only: "Well Shcharansky should not have got mixed up with the Helsinki Monitoring Group in Moscow. He was a naughty boy. He should not have been associating with those non-Jews. They are dissidents and we must always remember that we are not anti-Soviet. Anatoly has been naughty."

What kind of disgraceful dangerous drivel is this from a person in her responsible position? Do our Jewish leaders really want to see Anatoly Shcharansky put on trial and given a long ten or fifteen year sentence of imprisonment or even suffer the death sentence?

Our chairman is busy – so there cannot be any meeting of the Executive until September 25th – **SIX MONTHS** – yes indeed, six months – since the last meeting. Is there no emergency? Can Shcharansky wait? Can Professor Lerner wait? Can all the other Refuseniks sit down and wait? **WHAT KIND OF DISGRACEFUL ATTITUDE IS THIS?**

An innocent man stands in danger of being put on trial for his life and then if he is executed our leaders will ask us to stand in silence for one minute as they did for Yefim Davidovitch (for whom they did nothing while he was alive). We shall say Kaddish and we shall mourn – we Jews love to mourn – but meanwhile our leaders are too busy to put themselves out for him.

Shcharansky's friends in Moscow have asked us to try and form some sort of Tribunal as was arranged for Dr. Shtern – but we are told that this would take too long to organise – so nothing is done. Mr. John McDonald Q.C. who was asked by Irina Orlova to act as her husband's advocate, arranged two Press Conferences; the National Council was invited to both. Both invitations were ignored – i.e. treated with contempt. When asked if she would attend the first, our National Chairman replied "Good Lord, no!" or words to that effect. The second took the form of a mock trial with witnesses. Vitali Rubin was brought specially from Jerusalem for this purpose. He gave evidence as to the truth of the documents dealing with divided families, with the persecution of Davidovitch and with the harassment of the Jewish families in the Collective Village of Ilyinka because of their desire to emigrate to Israel, constantly being refused by the Soviet authorities. There are about 2 dozen of them already in Israel but when McDonald asked our Chairman how he could obtain testimony from them she replied that she knew of none in Israel. Naturally she didn't bother to enquire! I told Vitali how to find them and he brought their testimony on tape. I was the other Jewish witness and I gave testimony as to the truth of the document detailing large-scale disconnection of telephones of the Jewish Refuseniks. But the official body representing the interests of Soviet Jewry was "conspicuous by its absences". It is any wonder that Shcharansky received hardly a mentions at this mock trial?

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[634] Copy of open letter fro Michael Sherbourne, dated 28 June 1977, available at UofS MS 254/1/3/9 – Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry Admin.

Why have we not appointed a lawyer to act on Shcharansky's behalf in this country? In Paris a leading French advocate has been appointed – Maitre Roland RAPOPORT – why have we not even looked for a leading British Lawyer to act in liaison with Maitre Rapoport? In France Prof. Laurent Schwartz has formed a Committee of Mathematicians in Defence of Shcharansky. Why has something similar not been done here with Mathematicians, Computer Programmers, Chessplayers?

In Moscow, in his tiny cell or in the forbidding atmosphere of the Interrogation room in the Lefortovo, Shcharansky has no lawyer. None can be found with both the necessary courage and the necessary clearance to defend him. The only lawyers offered to him by the Soviet authorities are prepared – not to proclaim his innocence – but to declare him guilty and plead for a lighter sentence. They will perhaps get him 12 years instead of 15 or **DEATH**.

YET SHCHARANSKY IS INNOCENT OF ANY CRIME EXCEPT THAT OF WANTING TO LIVE IN ISRAEL AND OF EXPOSING THE INHUMANITY OF THE SOVIETS TO THEIR JEWISH MINORITY.

But Heaven forbid that we should be accused of being anti-Soviet, for our leaders say that that is why Shcharansky is in trouble today. Our leaders and salaried officers in both England and America say that Shcharansky should not have got mixed up with the Helsinki Monitoring Group in Moscow. Let us look at the truth:-

Yuri Orlov, a non-Jew, Chairman of the Group, is being charged under Article 190-1 "Defamation of the Soviet State etc." Maximum Penalty – **THREE** years. Minimum Penalty – a fine of 100 roubles.

Anatoly Shcharansky, a Jew, a member of the Group, representing Jewish interests is being held under Article 64a (and let us have no more of this nonsense that appeared in "The Bulletin" about there being a "confused picture"). **HIGH TREASON** – Maximum Penalty – **DEATH**. Minimum Penalty – **TEN** years.

Clearly Shcharansky is on trial for his life <u>because he is a Jewish leader</u> and meanwhile Jewish leaders here twiddle their thumbs – they have forgotten **DREYFUS** – they have forgotten **MENDEL BEILIS** – they have forgotten the **HOLOCAUST** – they have never heard of **ENTEBBE**.

WE NEED ACTION NOW – TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE

Shcharansky's friends in Moscow tell us that they fear that the Exit Permits for Azbel and Fein may presage an early trial. We **NEED ACTION NOW. NOW. NOW.**

We must even now try to prevent this Show Trial from taking place. Once it does come to court it will be too late. In Soviet "Justice" a defendant is only brought to trial when he is already declared guilty. The "trial" is only to give public pronouncement to a verdict already decided in advance.

Shcharansky has not been arrested because of his association with the so-called dissidents. He is in Lefortovo because he is a leader of those Jews who stand up to be counted as Jews.

Anatoly has been in prison since March 15. I challenge our Jewish Leaders to show that I am wrong and that they have done anything dramatic or urgent since the London demo of April 17 attended by about 6,000 out of nearly half a million Jews in this country.

WERE IT NOT FOR THE WONDERFUL LADIES OF THE 35'S for whom **I HAVE THE GREATED RESPECT, SHCHARANSKY'S NAME WOULD BE FORGOTTEN IN THIS COUNTRY.**

We have an Israeli representative here whose job is to direct and give some inspiration to this campaign. Yes, we have an Israeli here who maintains a great diplomatic silence and whose presence in this country and in this campaign goes almost unnoticed in this emergency – apart from the dead weight of his hand on any positive activity. He probably doesn't realise that there is an emergency.

Here I must quote from a letter I wrote to Mr. Nehemiah Levanon on 10. May, 1977.

"Dear Nehemiah,

I am writing to make an official complaint about your representative in London, Mr. Shmuel HATZOR. As you know I have frequently sent to you office Lists of names of Jews in the Soviet Union who are requesting invitations. However, since I have upset Mr. S. Hatzor personally, because I responded in kind to his attack on me over the question of co-operation with non-Jews to try to save Shcharansky, he has refused to accept some articles I sent him viz:

1. A Large envelope addressed to Dr. A. Luntz at Mevaseret Zion, containing amongst other important papers a **LIST OF MORE THAN 150 FAMILIES** in the USSR who are requesting invitations.

2. An envelope addressed to him personally containing my latest new sheet. Will you please point out to Mr. Hatzor that in his official capacity he is not entitled to allow personal pique to enter into the performance of his duties. His primary, and, I believe, his **SOLE** function here is to help Jews in the Soviet Union who wish to emigrate to Israel. By Not accepting my news sheet he I not keeping himself informed. That is his misfortune.

But by refusing to accept the lists of Jews who are asking for invitations from Israel to enable them to apply for emigration for Aliyah, he is doing incalculable harm both to the campaign as a while and to those more than 150 families in particular

"Disgraceful" is a word that is hardly adequate to describe his action and attitude. In my opinion his attitude is **CRIMINAL.**

Incidentally, Misha Stiglets has confirmed to me that my information and attitude over the Shcharansky case are correct in his opinion. He has told Hatzor so, and I understand Hatzor has accepted this. However I have heard not a word from Hatzor in regard to this.

I await your early reply as I intend to publish this letter."

I am now publishing this letter which has neither received reply nor any acknowledgement. I am not trying to be original. I can only copy the words of a much greater man than I will ever be – Emile Zola – a Frenchman, a non-Jew, who fought to save the life of a Jew.

J'ACCUSE J'ACCUSE J'ACCUSE

He accused the French Government.

I accuse our Jewish Leadership of cowardice, blindness, ineptitude, complacency and I conclude **SHCHARANSKY MUST BE SAVED.**

Michael Sherbourne, London, 28. 6. 77'

Appendix 4 – List of Keston College Publications

Keston Books:

1. M. Bourdeaux, *Faith on Trial in Russia* (London, 1971)
2. M. Bourdeaux, *Patriarchs and Prophets: Persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church Today* (London, 1975)
3. G. Vins, *Three Generations of Suffering* (London, 1976)
4. **UNKNOWN**
5. M. Bourdeaux and K. Murray, *Young Christians in Russia* (London, 1976)
6. J. Ellis (Trans.), *An Early Soviet Saint: The Life of Father Zachariah* (London, 1976)
7. H. Brandenburg, *The Meek and the Mighty: The Emergence of the Evangelical Movement in Russia* (London, 1976) **[OR M. Bourdeaux, *Religious Liberty in the Soviet Union: WCC and USSR: a post-Nairobi documentation* (Keston, 1976)]***
8. **UNKNOWN**
9. M. Bourdeaux, *Opium of the People: The Christian Religion in the USSR* (2nd ed.)(London, 1977)
10. D. J. Dunn, *The Catholic Church and the Soviet Government, 1939 -1949* (Columbia, 1977)
11. *Christian Prisoners in the USSR 1979* (Keston, 1979)
12. M. Bourdeaux, *Land of Crosses: The Struggle for Religious Freedom in Lithuania, 1939-78* (Chulmleigh, 1979)
13. M. Sapiets(Trans.), *The Unknown Homeland* (London, 1978)
14. **UNKNOWN**
15. **UNKNOWN**
16. M. Bourdeaux, *Risen Indeed: Lessons in Faith from the USSR* (Purley, 1983)
17. L. and M. Bourdeaux, *Ten Growing Soviet Churches* (Bungay, 1987)
18. A. Tomsky, *Catholic Poland* (Keston, 1982)
19. M. Bourdeaux (ed.), *May One Believe in Russia? – Violations of Religious Liberty in the Soviet Union* (London, 1980)
20. P. Walters and J. Balengarth, *Light Through the Curtain* (Tring, 1985)
21. L. Bourdeaux, *Valeri Barinov: The Trumpet Call* (Basingstoke, 1985)
22. J. Ellis, *Russian Orthodox Church: A Contemporary History* (Beckenham, 1986)
23. J. Robertson, *Be Our Voice: The Story of Michael Bourdeaux and Keston College* (London, 1984)
24. G. Sikorska, *A Martyr for Truth: Jerzy Popiełusko* (London, 1985)
25. **UNKNOWN**
26. A. Ogorodnikov, *A Desperate Cry* (Keston, 1986)
27. **UNKNOWN**
28. G. Sikorska, *Light and Life: Renewal in Poland* (London, 1989)
29. P. Walters (ed.) *World Christianity: Eastern Europe* (MARC, 1988)
30. *The Prisoners Lantern: Meditations by a Christian Prisoner in Ethiopia* (Keston, 1988)
31. M. Bourdeaux, *Gorbachev, Glasnost and the Bible* (London, 1990)
32. M. Sapiets, *True Witness: The story of Seventh Day Adventists in the Soviet Union* (Keston, 1990)
33. R. Davies, *After Gorbachev?* (Eastbourne, 1991)

*Both *The Meek and the Mighty* and *Religious Liberty in the Soviet Union* have been attributed to Keston Book Number 7

Others (unnumbered)

- D. Rogers, *Irina* (Tring, 1987)
- M. Bourdeaux, *Aida of Leningrad* (Oxford, 1972)
- R. Harris and X. Howard-Johnston, *Christian Appeals from Russia* (London, 1969)
- A. Sorokowskii (ed.), *For my name's sake: selections from the writings of Iosyp Terelya* (Keston, 1986)
- J. Ton, *Marxism: The Faded Dream: A Christian Manifesto* (Basingstoke, 1985)
- R. M. Yule, *Religion in Communist Countries: A Bibliography of Books in English* (Keston, 1979)
- *Soviet Christian Prisoner List 1981* (Keston, 1981)
- *Soviet Christian Prisoner list 1982 Update* (Keston, 1982)
- *What Are They Doing At Keston?* (Keston, 1982)

Periodicals:

- *Religion in Communist Lands* 1973 – 1992
- *Religion, State and Society* 1992 – Present (Control of Journal passed to Taylor and Francis in 1999)
- *Frontier* 1987 to 2006
- *Keston Newsletter* 2006 to Present
- *Keston News Service* 1974 to 2002

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IDC Amnesty International Microfiche Collection, 1962-2008 Marylebone Information Service, Marylebone Library, London, UK.

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Beeson, T., *Discretion and Valour* (Glasgow, 1974)

Bergman, J, *Meeting the Demands of Reason, The Life and Thought of Andrei Sakharov* (Ithaca, 2009)

Bloch, S., and Reddaway, P., *Russia's Political Hospitals* (London, 1977) [published in the United States as *Psychiatric Terror: How Soviet Psychiatry is used to Suppress Dissent* (New York, 1977)]

Bloch, S., and Reddaway, P., *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse: The Shadow over World Psychiatry* (London, 1984)

Bonavia, G., *Fat Sasha and the Urban Guerrilla: Protest and Conformism in the Soviet Union* (London, 1973)

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Peterson, C., *Wielding the Human Rights Weapon: The United States, Soviet Union, and Private Citizens, 1975-1989* (PhD Dissertation, submitted to Ohio University, June 2009)

Interviews

- Canon Michael Bourdeaux
  - 24 February 2010, 12:30pm, Athenaeum Club, Pall Mall, London.
  - 19 May 2010, 10.00am, 'Bourdeaux House', Oxford.
- Vladimir Bukovsky
  - 18 January 2011, 4.00pm, 'Bukovsky's House', Cambridge.
- Xenia Dennen
  - 21 May 2010, 11.00am, 'Dennen Residence' Holborn, London.
- Lord Greville Janner
  - 25 May 2010, 5.00pm, Lords Terrace, House of Lords, Westminster, London.
- Professor Harold Merskey
  - 22 October 2010, 3.00pm, Telephone interview.
- Professor Peter Reddaway
  - 05 July 2010, 10.00am, 'Reddaway's House', Maclean, Virginia, US.
  - 08 September 2011, 10.00am, 'Reddaway's House', Maclean, Virginia, US.
- Margaret and George Rigal
  - 25 February 2010, 2.00pm, 'Rigal Apartment', St. Johns Wood, London.
- Michael Sherbourne
  - 09 May 2011, 11.00am, 'Sherbourne's House', N. Finchley, London.
- Sir Tom Stoppard
  - 05 January 2011, 2.00pm, Telephone Interview.
- Dr Robert Van Voren
  - 11 January 2011, 3:00pm, 'CADS bar', Paddington, London.
- Dr Philip Walters
  - 19 May 2010, 2.30pm, Corpus Christi College SCR, Oxford.

Notes for interviews and transcripts

- All start times are approximate and based on the British time zone, with the exception of interviews with Peter Reddaway which are based on US Eastern Time.
- If the interview took place at an interviewees place of residence, full details are not disclosed. Instead the interviewees surname and type of house are listed instead, i.e. 'Bourdeaux House'.
- Transcriptions of these interviews are verbatim, with no notation of intonation or pace of delivery. Transcripts are unavailable for the interviews with Harold Merskey and Tom Stoppard, which both took place over the telephone.
- All of these interviews were semi-structured around two main questions:
  - How were you involved with British groups campaigning for Soviet dissenters?
  - How do you feel your efforts were received?
- Quotations within this piece are made from the transcript of the interview, with pauses and hesitations (such as um, erm and ah) removed. Words added to these quotes in order to maintain continuity and fluency are placed in square brackets.
- Copies of transcripts are available from the author on request.